ATHENIAN LETTERS:

OR, THE

Epiſtolary Correſpondence

OF AN

AGENT of the King of PERSIA,

RESIDING AT

ATHENS during the Peloponneſian War.

CONTAINING

The HISTORY of the Times, in Diſpatches to the Miniſters of State at the Perſian Court.

BESIDES

LETTERS on various Subjects between Him and His Friends.

VOL. IV.

LONDON:
Printed by JAMES BETTENHAM.
M,DCC,XLIII.

CONTENTS

OR, THE

OF THE

Fourth VOLUME.

OF AN

LETTER CXLIII.

GOBRYAS TO CLEANDER.

LAYS open the virtues of the Persian court: instructs him to bribe CLEON. Copy of a letter from the king to CLEON. Page 1.

LETTER CXLIV.

GOBRYAS TO CLEANDER.

Informs him, that a ship in the Piraeus is ready to sail at a minute's warning, if his negotiation with CLEON should fail: assures him of his favour: speaks of the queen mother's death, AMORGES's vindication, and other occurrences. Page 6.

LETTER CXLV.

CRATIPPUS TO CLEANDER.

Instructions to the Spartan embassadors: apprehensions for the garison in Sphacteria. Page 10.

LETTER CXLVI.

CLEANDER TO GOBRYAS.

Gives him an account, in what manner he has executed his commission with regard to CLEON: danger of his situation at Athens: presses to be recalled. Page 12.

CONTENTS

OF THE

Fourth VOLUME.

LETTER CXLIII.

GOBRYAS to CLEANDER.

LAYS open the views of the Perſian court: inſtructs him to bribe CLEON. *Copy of a letter from the king to* CLEON. Page 1.

LETTER CXLIV.

GOBRYAS to CLEANDER.

Informs him, that a ſhip in the Piræus is ready to ſaid at a minute's warning, if his negotiation with CLEON *ſhould fail: aſſures him of his favour: ſpeaks of the queen mother's death,* AMORGES's *vindication, and other occurrences.* Page 6.

LETTER CXLV.

CRATIPPUS to CLEANDER.

Inſtructions to the Spartan embaſſadors: apprehenſions for the gariſon in Sphacteria. Page 10.

LETTER CXLVI.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

Gives him an account, in what manner he has executed his commiſſion with regard to CLEON: *danger of his ſituation at Athens: preſſes to be recalled.* Page 12.

CONTENTS.

LETTER CXLVII.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS.

Expresses his doubts as to the morality of his conduct and employment: desires some consolation from him. Page 19.

LETTER CXLVIII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

Detail of the negotiation of the Lacedæmonian embassadors at Athens: CLEON *elected general; and other matters.* Page 21.

LETTER CXLIX.

CLEANDER to ORSAMES.

Conversation with ALCIBIADES *on the rise and character of the Sophists.* Page 31.

LETTER CL.

To the same.

Account of a dispute between SOCRATES *and* PROTAGORAS *the Sophist in the Lyceum.* Page 38.

LETTER CLI.

SMERDIS to CLEANDER.

Is concerned for the disquiet of his mind; exhorts him to leave his employment in the present circumstances, as the only means of preserving his integrity. Page 44.

LET-

CONTENTS.

LETTER CLII.

GOBRYAS to CLEANDER.

Arrival of the Lacedæmonian embaſſadors: negotiation between them and the king's miniſters; broke off by the latter. Of PYTHON *the Athenian agent, and other matters.* Page 47.

LETTER CLIII.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS.

On the art of divination. Page 57.

LETTER CLIV.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

Athenians ſucceſs at Sphacteria, and rejoicings for it. Preparations againſt Corinth. Maſſacre at Corcyra. Reflections on the ſtate of the Perſian affairs with regard to Greece. Renews his deſire to be recalled. Intelligence ſent by PYTHON. Page 65.

LETTER CLV.

CLEON and DEMOSTHENES to the Senate and People of Athens.

Narrative of the action at Sphacteria. Page 71.

LETTER CLVI.

CLEANDER to CRATIPPUS.

Diſcourſe with an Athenian on public inſcriptions. Page 75.

LET-

CONTENTS.

LETTER CLVII.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES.

A converſation with EURIPIDES *on the machinery of tragedies. Some reaſons ſuggeſted, why the Athenians have recourſe to fabulous ſtory alone for their plots. Exhorts him to build a theatre at Suſa. Sends him a ſketch of a play entitled,* CYRUS *in Sardis.* Page 81.

LETTER CLVIII.

SMERDIS to CLEANDER.

Endeavours to convince him, that oracles and divination have their riſe from ARIMANIUS. *Origin of evil according to the Magian theology.* Page 92.

LETTER CLIX.

GOBRYAS to CLEANDER.

His conduct with regard to CLEON *applauded; and his apprehenſions of a diſcovery removed. Inſtructs him in what manner to confer with* CLEON. ARTAPHERNES *ready to ſet out on his Spartan embaſſy. Encloſes the king's letter to that ſtate.* Page 97.

LETTER CLX.

CRATIPPUS to CLEANDER.

The unreaſonableneſs of national prejudices. Character of ARISTOMENES *the Meſſenian.* Page 106.

LETTER CLXI.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS.

Recites a diſcourſe of SOCRATES *on the immortality of the ſoul, in a viſit to a ſick friend.* Page 113.

LET-

CONTENTS.

LETTER CLXII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

His uneaſy ſituation at Athens; ſubmiſſion to the king's orders. CLEON's *return from Sphacteria, and ſpeech to the people. Aſſembly's decree about the priſoners, and anſwer to the Spartans propoſals of peace.* NICIAS's *ineffectual expedition to Corinth.* CLEON's *extravagant flights. Conference between him and* CLEANDER. *Advice about a general pacification.* Page 118.

LETTER CLXIII.

CRATIPPUS to CLEANDER.

Reflexions on ARTAPHERNES's *journey and commiſſion. Maſſacre of two thouſand Helots. Expreſſes his deteſtation of ſuch an act of barbarity.* Page 132.

LETTER CLXIV.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES.

Converſation with ARISTOPHANES *on the turn of his comedies.* Page 136.

LETTER CLXV.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER.

ARTÆUS *viſits him at Taoces; his thoughts on retirement. Characters of* PARMYS, AZANE, *and the other companions of* ORSAMES; *rejoices in his own felicity at having entred into a family untainted with the vices of the age. Invites* CLEANDER *to ſhare the pleaſures of the place and the company.* Page 146.

LET-

CONTENTS.

LETTER CLXVI.

CLEANDER to HARBAHAL of Sidon, admiral of the Perſian gallies.

Congratulates him on his promotion: tells him, in what particulars the Perſian fleet requires a reformation. Some remarks on the naval power and commerce of the Athenians: the former not to be had without firſt acquiring the latter. Page 152.

LETTER CLXVII.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS.

The intercommunity of religious ceremonies amongſt the Greeks. Some particulars of their forms and manner of worſhip. Page 159.

LETTER CLXVIII.

To the ſame.

On ſacrifices. Page 164.

LETTER CLXIX.

SMERDIS to CLEANDER.

Maintains, that a regard to our own happineſs is a juſt and honourable motive to the practice of virtue. Page 169.

LETTER CLXX.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

Fragment of a letter; in which the king's illneſs, and the treachery of TERITEUCHMES, *and of the governors of Cyprus and Ægypt, are alluded to.* Page 173.

LET-

CONTENTS.

LETTER CLXXI.

INTAPHERNES to CLEANDER.

Solemnity of the king's birth-day. Death and character of HYDASPES *the chamberlain.* Page 176.

LETTER CLXXII.

CLEANDER to HYLLUS.

Gives him directions as to the management of his farms and villa. Page 179.

LETTER CLXXIII.

CLEANDER to TERIBAZUS.

Expreſſes great ſatisfaction in being reſtored to terms of friendſhip with him. Enters into an account of the ſources of wealth in Athens, and its revenues. Project for the improvement of the ſilver mines. Contributions levied on the allies. All the taxes paid in current money to the ſtate, contrary to the cuſtom of Perſia. Page 182.

LETTER CLXXIV.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

Surprized at the ſeizure of ARTAPHERNES *in Thrace, and his arrival at Athens. Conference with* CLEON *on that ſubject. Speculations of the people about it. Delivers his own opinion of the cauſe and conſequences of that event.* Page 189.

CONTENTS.

LETTER CLXXV.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

Debate in the aſſembly on the ſcheme of an expedition for the next year againſt the iſland of Cythera. Speeches of CLEON, DIODOTUS, EPIGENES, *and* ALCIBIADES. Page 196.

LETTER CLXXVI.

SAPPHO to CLEANDER.

Compliments him on an ode, which he appears to have written upon her. Deſires to be diſtinguiſhed by the domeſtic virtues, rather than by thoſe external charms, which ſhine ſo much in poetry. Page 207.

LETTER CLXXVII.

SAPPHO to the ſame.

Expoſtulates with him upon ſome liberties, which he is ſuppoſed to have taken with her character, and renounces all future correſpondence with him. Page 209.

LETTER CLXXVIII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

Good effects, which the confining PYTHON *has produced at Athens. Subſtance of the aſſembly's letter to the king. Gives the reaſons, why* ARTAPHERNES *and himſelf have not exactly followed their inſtructions. Election of embaſſadors for the Perſian court. Their characters.* Page 211.

LET-

CONTENTS.

LETTER *LXXV.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES.

Gives him an account of the proſecution commenced by CLEON *againſt* ARISTOPHANES *before the Areopagus: their ſeveral pleadings before that court: wiſhes, that the ſatirical ſpecies of wit were aboliſhed out of the world.* Page 221.

APPENDIX.

Page 227.

LETTER CLXXIX.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS.

This letter (acknowledged to be a ſpurious one by the Tranſlator) contains a viſion on the origin, progreſs, and revolutions both of ancient and modern phyſics. Page 228.

End of the Contents of the Fourth Volume.

ADDENDA to the Corrections in the Third Volume.

Page 152. *Line* 12. *For* bad, *read* evil.

Page 181. *At the end of Letter* CXXXII, *put the mark* P.

Page 192. *Line* 1, 2. *For* aſcent, *read* aſſent.

Page 216. *Line* 20. *For* ways, *read* rays.

Page 244. *Line* 21. *For* conſtellation, *read* configuration.

ERRATA of this Fourth Volume.

Page 21. *Line* 15. *Dele the full ſtop* [.] *inſert a comma* [,]

Page 32. *Line* 24. *Dele the colon* [:] *inſert a comma* [,]

Page 33. *Line* 22. *Dele the words* " a reaſon.

Page 38. *Line* 16. *For* inſtructions, *read* inſtruction.

Page 41. *Line* 5. *Between the words* " were neceſſary, *inſert* " even.

Page 42. *Line ult. immediately before the word* " principle, *inſert the word* abſtract.

Page 45. *Line* 1. *For* illuminations, *read* illumination.

Page 47. *In the inſcription of Letter* CLII. *read* GOBRYAS *to* CLEANDER.

Page 76. *Line* 10. *Dele the word* their.

Page 81. *Line* 13. *For* expectations, *read* expectation.

Page 96. *Line* 22. *For* proceed, *read* proceeded.

Page 125. *Line* 25. *Dele the words* and repreſented.

Page 131. *Line* 20. *For* their, *read* his.

Page 139. *Line ult. For* falls, *read* ſinks.

Page 154. *Line* 11. *For* mediated, *read* meditated.

Page 176. *Line.* 18. *For* ſtate, *read* throne.

Page 190. *Line* 4. *For* diſtinguiſhing, *read* diſtinguiſhed.

Page 192. *Line* 29. *For* baſe, *read* bare.

Page 196. *Line* 9. *For* jealouſly, *read* jealouſy.

Page 208. *Line* 11. *For* theſe, *read* the.

Page 225. *Line* 24. *For* is, *read* are.

Page 237. *Line* 3. *For* eight, *read* ſeven.

Page 238. *Line* 23. *Between the words* roof the, *inſert* of.

ATHENIAN LETTERS:

OR,

The epiſtolary correſpondence of an agent of the king of Perſia, reſiding at Athens, during the Peloponneſian war.

A. M. 3579. *4th year of the* 88*th Olymp.*

The ſeventh year of the Peloponneſian war.

LETTER CXLIII.

GOBRYAS to CLEANDER.

THE reception, which has been given to thy nephew CHARICLES at this court, will ſhow thee, with what weight thy recommendations are attended; nor can our opinion of his diligence and fidelity be expreſſed in a ſtronger manner, than by the commiſſion he is charged with to deliver theſe diſpatches into thy hands.

Thou canſt not be inſenſible, that, for various reaſons of intereſt and prudence, Perſia has hitherto declined taking any part in the war, which for ſome years has, with greater or leſs fury, been carried on among the Grecian ſtates. Pleaſed, that the whole at-

tention of our enemies was diverted from taking advantage of our weakneſs, and their ſtrength waſted by domeſtic diviſions, we looked on this interval of tranquillity, this reſpite from unfortunate campaigns, as providentially ſent to enable us to heal our loſs, and recover the advantages, which, under the firſt monarchs, rendered this empire formidable to the reſt of the world. But as it was never intended, that our repoſe ſhould degenerate into inactivity, or our influence on the affairs of foreign nations be entirely loſt, a favourable opportunity was expected to interpoſe with vigor and ſucceſs, and break through thoſe diſgraceful conditions, which the neceſſity of the times had impoſed upon us. This juncture, we hope, is at laſt arrived. Sparta ſeems diſpoſed to embrace our friendſhip, and act in concert with us; and ſince it is leſs againſt the intereſt of that ſtate, to grant us the terms, which we expect in exchange for our aſſiſtance, than of any other, the king is inclined to think a Lacedæmonian alliance the moſt eligible meaſure he can purſue. But it has been juſtly apprehended, that theſe favourable ſymptoms in the Spartan counſels may have an unwiſhed-for effect, of alarming the Athenians with the proſpect of Perſia's taking a ſhare in the war againſt them, and inducing that republic to accept a diſadvantageous peace, rather than hazard being oppreſſed by the united weight of ſo formidable a confederacy. It has been conſidered likewiſe, that in the preſent ſtate of the war, which has drawn together almoſt the whole ſtrength of both parties at Pylus, ſome action may ſhortly enſue, conſiderable enough to turn the balance in favor of one ſide or

the

the other, and bring on a precipitate accommodation, unleſs at the ſame time, that precautions are taken to ſecure Sparta beyond a poſſibility of retracting her engagements, the like care is uſed at Athens, to foment the violent humour of the party, who wiſh the continuance of the war. Theſe deſirable ends can no otherwiſe be attained, than on one hand by flattering the ambition of the Lacedæmonians with the hopes of attaining an unrivalled ſuperiority over the reſt of the Greeks; and on the other, by engaging ſome principal perſon in the government of Athens, to co-operate indirectly with us, through motives of private intereſt or miſtaken policy. I need not point out to you, that the uneaſy condition of CLEON's private fortune, his raſh and turbulent ſpirit averſe to quiet and ſettled times, and the ſtrong paſſion, which he has at heart, of ſacrificing every thing to preſerve his authority with the people, are circumſtances in his character, that concur to render him the fitteſt engine for us to work with. But you will think all other arguments needleſs, when I have mentioned the overture he has already made, to begin a correſpondence with this court.

Upon telling PYTHON the other day in a conference, that I very much ſuſpected the amicable intentions of his republic towards Perſia, becauſe they not only deferred returning an anſwer to the juſt complaints of our merchants, but had ſince added inſults to injuries, by giving refuge to ZOPYRUS, whom the king had declared a fugitive and a traitor; he replied, among other things, that though the people might entertain prejudices againſt us, ſome of the firſt men in the ſtate were

ſtrongly inclined to cultivate our friendſhip; adding, to confirm what he ſaid, that he was commiſſioned by CLEON to lay him at the king's feet, with the ſincereſt profeſſions of reſpect to his royal perſon, and deſire of meriting his favor.

Upon theſe grounds, which I have opened to you at large, I have the king's direction to ſignify his pleaſure to you, to take the moſt ſeaſonable and early opportunity, after inſinuating yourſelf ſo far into CLEON's eſteem, as to induce him to repoſe a confidence in you, to preſent him with the incloſed letter from the king, wherein he expreſſes the opinion he has, both of his capacity and intention to do him ſervice, and deſires, that he would give credit to what you ſhould communicate to him in purſuance of your inſtructions.

When you have thus entered upon the ſubject, and diſcovered, by the reception it meets with from CLEON, how far you may venture to open yourſelf with freedom to him, you ſhall proceed to engage him to uſe his utmoſt efforts in the aſſembly, to render fruitleſs any negotiations, which may be ſet on foot; flatter his ambition with the thoughts of reducing Lacedæmon, and fixing the balance of Greece, during his adminiſtration in the hands of Athens; alarm his fears with the deſigns of NICIAS to promote an enquiry into his conduct, as ſoon as the war ſhall be concluded; and remind him of the views of Sparta to ruin one, whom they look upon as their greateſt enemy, by favouring the ſchemes of the oppoſite party. Nor can you well fail of ſucceeding, if you enforce theſe political reaſonings with the more weighty arguments tranſmitted to you by TERIBAZUS, the

the ſilent operation of which has more than once determined the fate of kingdoms.

In ſhort, as the whole of this important buſineſs is entruſted to thy management, ſo the time and manner of introducing it, the ſubſequent advantages to be gained from it, and, above all, the method of concealing it from the moſt diſcerning eyes, muſt be left entirely to thy diſcretion, who art able, not only from thy abilities, but thy experience in the affairs of Greece, to regulate thy conduct by lights on the ſpot, which it is not in our power to afford thee at this diſtance.

As ſoon as thou canſt inform us of the iſſue, thou wilt diſpatch CHARICLES hither again with the utmoſt expedition. If thou meeteſt with ſucceſs, thou wilt have the honor of performing the moſt advantageous ſervice to ARTAXERXES, that has for ages been atchieved by any miniſter of Perſia. And if an unlooked for misfortune ſhould diſappoint our expectations, and thy beſt endeavours, may ſome light bark convey my CLEANDER ſafe from the rage of the exaſperated Athenians, to the friendly ſhores of Aſia.

ARTAXERXES the king to CLEON.

WE have great reaſon to be ſatisfied with the aſſurances, which PYTHON communicated to us in your name, being perſuaded, as well of the ſincerity of your intentions, as the abilities you poſſeſs to conduct yourſelf in a manner, that may be agreeable to us. We deſire you to give entire credit to whatever CLEANDER the Epheſian, our ſervant, ſhall ſay to you on our part; and to be aſſured, that the radiant MI-

THRAS is not more regular in performing his annual courſe, than we are conſtant in extending our bounties to thoſe, who deſerve well at our hands.

Given at our royal palace of Perſepolis, the laſt of the moon Adar, and 42d of our reign. P.

LETTER CXLIV.

GOBRYAS to CLEANDER.

I Shall not pretend to add any thing to the inſtructions, which I have ſent you by the king's orders concerning CLEON. Both the reaſons of this meaſure, and the particular ſteps, which you are to take in the management of it, are clearly and fully marked out. The chief intent of my preſent letter, is to acquaint you, that LYGDAMUS of Cyprus, the captain of the veſſel, which carries over CHARICLES, has it in charge to continue in the Piræeus under pretence of trade, till he receive directions from you, as to his departure. He is not in the leaſt acquainted with the ſecret of your commiſſion; and you may ſecurely depend on his fidelity and diſcretion, as a man of honor, and his care and ſkill as a ſeaman. When you deliver him the token, by which he will know you to be the perſon I have mentioned to him, there will be no occaſion to open yourſelf any further than by telling him, you are employed on a particular buſineſs for the king at Athens, and muſt deſire he would keep his ſhip in readineſs to ſail at a minute's warning. If your negotiation meets with the deſired iſſue, purſue the contents of your inſtructions

ſtructions by rediſpatching CHARICLES with the advice of it. But if CLEON either refuſes the propoſals, or heſitates, about accepting them, a moment's longer ſtay in Athens will be unſafe. Embark therefore with the utmoſt ſpeed, for the firſt port you can arrive at in the Perſian dominions; and make uſe of the order I have ſent you for poſt horſes, to haſten your journey to the court, where, believe me, we have not ſo ungrateful a ſenſe of your paſt ſervices, as to afford you a worſe reception, after having failed of ſucceſs in ſo nice and dangerous a commiſſion. Be aſſured, on the contrary, that your friends will omit nothing in their power, that can contribute towards your obtaining a recompence proportionate to the hazards you have already undergone, and to the opinion they entertain of your extraordinary merit.

I refer you to CHARICLES, who has been a diligent obſerver of whatever has paſſed ſince his arrival amongſt us, for the ordinary occurrences of the court. He will not fail to give you an account of the queen-mother's death, and the ceremonial of her interment on the royal mount. It is generally imagined, that the miſconduct of her daughter, added to the unfortunate end of her grandſon ZOPYRUS, affected her with ſo deep a concern in the retirement, which of late years ſhe has enjoyed, as to ſhorten her days. Our monarch has not been deficient in expreſſing the ſincerity of his concern for the loſs of one ſo dear to him; nor omitted any inſtance of a pious reſpect to her memory.

There are two or three other points, which having a more immediate relation to the duty of our re-

ſpective employments, I ſhall not diſpenſe with myſelf from touching upon, in as few words as I can.

When the news arrived, that ZOPYRUS was ſlain in his rebellious attack againſt Caunus, the king, out of regard to the ſervices of his illuſtrious father, and his relation to the royal blood, forbad any publick rejoicings to be made; but was ſo much incenſed at the behaviour of the Athenians, in permitting ZOPYRUS to ſail out of their ports, that he ſent immediate orders to AMORGES, to put to death all the priſoners, who were natives of that city. Two indeed were ſpared at the interceſſion of PYTHON, who repreſented, that they were deſcendants of CIMON, and that any reſpect ſhewn to the family and name of that great captain and worthy citizen, would be looked upon as an act of ſingular generoſity in the king. The poor governor of Caria has been very near falling a victim to the baſe artifices of one of our miniſters, who wanted to ſupplant him, and the malice of a favourite female ſlave, who can never forgive ſome words, which dropt from him in raillery, relating to her. A moſt terrible cabal was formed, and he was accuſed of nothing leſs than an actual correſpondence with ZOPYRUS. I obtained leave for him to be heard in his own defence, before the council of ſeven; and though the objections to his conduct were plauſibly dreſſed up, he made it appear to the ſatisfaction of all diſintereſted judges, that had he not purſued the meaſures, which he did, the whole province of Caria had broken out into an open revolt.

I diſcovered, that the vileſt practices had been uſed to extort confeſſions to his prejudice from ſeveral of the priſoners

priſoners, particularly, a deſpicable eunuch, who ſerved ZOPYRUS as a ſecretary. But as opening a ſcene of iniquity may, in ſome caſes, introduce more diſorders, than it can tend to reform, I adviſed AMORGES, after obtaining an honourable juſtification of himſelf, to puſh the matter no farther.

It is not neceſſary for me to enlarge upon the tragical accident, which has lately befallen ſome of our young ſatraps at the court of SITALCES, ſince your nephew is well informed of the particulars. The affair makes a great noiſe, and is much to be lamented; two of the ſons of ARBERIUS, general of the horſe, and RESACES, ſatrap of Aſſyria, are amongſt the ſlain; and indeed not undeſervedly, for, according to the beſt accounts, the diſorder took it's riſe from their licentious and extravagant behaviour, though the reſentment of the Thracian lords was carried to an unwarrantable exceſs. What happened in that country, during the reign of * DARIUS, on an occaſion pretty nearly reſembling this, might have taught our young ſatraps more diſcretion; for the jealouſy of that barbarous and ſuſpicious people is not to be trifled with.

ARTAXERXES, beſides ſoliciting the puniſhment of the aſſaſſins at the court of Thrace, has publiſhed an edict prohibiting any of his ſubjects (except merchants and artificers) from going out of his dominions, without a licence from the council of ſeven, under the ſevereſt penalties; and has likewiſe diſpatched inſtructions ſealed with the imperial ſignet, to the governors

* Vide Herod. lib. v. cap. 18. &c.

of

of the provinces, and our agents in foreign countries, which injoin them to take particular notice of ſuch, as preſume to diſobey this irrevocable mandate. I have encloſed copies of both for your peruſal, and ſhall conclude, by recommending it to your good genius, to inſpire you with a double portion of boldneſs, addreſs, and vigilance in your undertaking. P.

LETTER CXLV.

CRATIPPUS to CLEANDER.

I Received lately a diſpatch from the chief ſcribe, in which he informed me, that he had tranſmitted to you ſome particular inſtructions of great importance in regard to your conduct at Athens; and that if I could afford you any light into the affairs now carrying on, it might tend very much to advance the king's ſervice.

You will do me the juſtice to believe, that I want no orders from Suſa, to renew a correſpondence ſo profitable to myſelf, whenever it can be done with ſafety to us both; and that I waited for nothing but a ſure and ſpeedy conveyance, to give you the beſt intelligence in my power of the preſent diſpoſitions of this republic.

How ſincerely they are diſpoſed to accommodate matters, will appear from the inſtructions given to AGIS, PYSANDER, and CHYLON, their embaſſadors, the ſubſtance of which I ſhall proceed to lay before you. They are in the firſt place ordered to repreſent to the Athenian aſſembly the earneſt deſires of this ſtate to

put

put an end to the expenſive war, which has ſo long raged over Greece, to the diſſolving the general union, and the great weakening and impoveriſhing each particular commonwealth. They are to mention the action of Pylus, as what chiefly induced them to apply firſt for peace; which ought not to render the Athenians leſs inclined to treat, becauſe experience will teach them, that ſucceſs is uſually followed with a reverſe of fortune; and the more moderation they ſhew in proſperity, the greater will be the regard and eſteem conceived for them by the reſt of Greece.

They are next inſtructed to deſire, that commiſſioners may be appointed to confer with them upon the particular conditions of a peace. They are to propoſe, on their ſide, a releaſement of the Spartans blocked up in Sphacteria; a reciprocal exchange of the towns and priſoners taken during the war; and, if it is inſiſted upon, a ſum of money for the redelivery of Pylus into the hands of it's old maſters.

The embaſſadors are further enjoined, not to break off the conferences, though the demands of the Athenian commiſſaries ſhould differ from theirs; but to ſend an account to Sparta, and expect freſh orders. How far theſe propoſals will prove acceptable at Athens, thou art the beſt judge, from thy knowledge of the characters of the ruling men, and the temper of the people; but that they will not coincide with the ſchemes of our court, I am extremely perſuaded.

This ſtate expects daily to hear from the embaſſadors, whom they ſent to Perſia. I believe they will ſtay till they ſee the event of this Athenian treaty, before they ſend them freſh inſtructions. It

It is difficult for any one, who is not an eye-witneſs, to form an idea of the anxiety and conſternation, which prevails over the whole city, on account of the danger, that threatened the Spartans in Sphacteria. They call the loſs, which the republic is like to ſuſtain, in caſe the Athenians make a deſcent into the iſland, the greateſt blow, they ſhall have received ſince the memorable action at Thermopylæ; for it is not doubted, but theſe men will imitate LEONIDAS, by falling with their arms in their hands.

There is ſomething rough, I confeſs, but at the ſame time wonderfully noble in the martial policy of this people, which teaches them rather to ſink under miſfortunes, after a vigorous ſtruggle for ſucceſs, than purchaſe ſafety, where the conſequences might tend to depreſs the ſpirits of their countrymen, and leſſen the opinion, which their enemies have juſtly entertained of their valour. P.

LETTER CXLVI.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

I Received thy diſpatches, with the thirty talents, which were ſent me by the treaſurer, and have executed thy commands with fidelity. The ſword continues drawn, nor ſhall be ſheathed but in the boſom of this city.

In expectation of what might happen, I have, unknown to my patron PHILEMON, taken much pains to recommend myſelf to the company and acquaintance of

CLEON.

CLEON. I have viſited him at his own houſe, held ſeveral private conferences with him, preſented his wife with ſome Ionian ſilks; in a word, by doing offices of courteſy to himſelf and his family, have gained his entire confidence, and made my way, at length, to his ſentiments in politics. I have already acquainted thee with the ſucceſs of the Athenians at Pylus, and with the intentions of the Spartans to ſend deputies hither in order to demand peace. Theſe deputies are on the point of arriving. And now liſten to the ſequel, noble GOBRYAS; for as ſoon as I received information of their meſſage, I waited on CLEON, and ſounded him, as far as I properly might, upon the ſubject. I told him, "I could not help joining in that joy, which every man, who wiſhed well to Athens, ſeemed fond of expreſſing on the late ſucceſs at Pylus; and that I came to congratulate him, as one, who, being at the head of affairs, contributed the moſt of any perſon in the ſtate, by the wiſdom of his counſels, to ſecure it's general felicity, and who might be conſidered as the remote cauſe of that particular advantage." "How firmly, continued I, muſt the city be attached to your intereſts, when it reflects, that your abilities have retrieved the uſual good fortune of the Athenians, have made amends for the diſhonourable meaſures of the timorous, the tardy PERICLES; and have opened a very fair proſpect of conqueſt and glory to thoſe, who before, diſpirited with all imaginable circumſtances of diſtreſs, thought of nothing but defeat and ignominy!" When I had ſaid this, the vanity of CLEON began to operate, and a ſecret ſatisfaction in the praiſes I had given

given him roſe into his countenance. He anſwered, "that he could claim very little in this affair, but the grace of vigorous reſolutions. To theſe indeed he had always profeſſed himſelf a warm friend, and would invariably continue ſo." "You cannot, returned I, act in a way more becoming your own character, or the honor of your country. Excellent CLEON! you have truly thought, that to behave with courage is the beſt policy. Behold, what a ſudden change is wrought in the face of your affairs, by the operations of one active campaign! The pride of Sparta is humbled; the Peloponneſians ſue for peace." "Yes, replied he, with an elevated tone of voice, they ſue for peace, becauſe they know it is in the power of the commonwealth to purſue it's good fortune, and effectually reduce the haughty and aſpiring Lacedæmon to a level with the meaneſt republic of Greece." "Moſt certainly, ſaid I. You, who ſee further into the courſe of events than other men, know, that, inſtead of cloſing in with the advice of PERICLES's faction, who proceed on the low and ſhort-ſighted maxims of his politics, it would be right for Athens to bring down the Spartans in ſuch a manner, as that they ſhall never be able to recover themſelves, or thwart the future deſigns of Athens for it's own credit, and the welfare of it's allies." CLEON ſeemed to applaud what I threw out, and added, "that, for his own part, he had always cautioned his citizens againſt treating with the Lacedæmonians on an equal footing, ſince they were difficult to be pleaſed, fond of delays, and expected to make conditions for themſelves. I ſhould not wonder, ſaid he, if ſome propoſe it in the enſuing

debates of the aſſembly, as a matter to be conſidered, whether it would not be highly for our intereſt, to cloſe the war at this juncture in the midſt of the Athenian proſperity. What if that old formal prig DIODOTUS, the orator, or the young coxcomb, ALCIBIADES, ſhould favour thoſe Peloponneſian deputies; and, in imitation of their maſter PERICLES, put us off with a good ſpeech, or a ſimile, inſtead of reaſon? Will not they repreſent to us the ravages we have already ſuffered, and the danger of a new incurſion into Attica? Will not they talk to us of the inſtability of fortune; and tell us, that we ought not to exaſperate the Peloponneſians too far, and drive them on to victory through deſpair? I warrant you, they will produce their common-place topics, and perhaps quote to us the anſwer of THEMISTOCLES, who, when the Greeks had a deſign of deſtroying XERXES's bridge over the Helleſpont, ſaid, "that ſo far from breaking down what he had made there, they had better lay him a new one than detain him with them." Such things as theſe are apt to make an impreſſion on the multitude." "No, replied I, this ſophiſtry can never do againſt the power of your eloquence." And yet (interpoſed he with the uſual unſteadineſs of an obſtinate man, when not controlled or contradicted in any thing he aſſerts to be true) there appears to be ſome weight in theſe arguments; ſince in time of peace we may have an opportunity of ſecurely eſtabliſhing our dominion over the reſt of Greece." On obſerving, that hints of this kind came from him, I endeavoured to confirm him in the other way of thinking, by repreſenting, "that the Athenians were

were more likely to adhere to the preſent adminiſtration in war than in peace, when they would have leiſure to turn their thoughts homewards, and examine into the ſtate of their finances, the management of their fleet, the government of the iſlands, the fidelity of their officers, and be ſanguin to reform what they call abuſes, or, (which is generally the conſequence of ſuch precipitate enquiries) to introduce new ones in attempting to amend the old." "Nay, anſwered he, with great warmth, (reſuming his firſt reflections on the pride of the Spartans, and the conduct of the Peloponneſians,) for my own part, rather than ſubmit to the terms, which the Peloponneſians would offer us, if they were ſucceſsful, I would call in the king of Perſia to our aſſiſtance. And in ſaying that, continued he, I ſay nothing, which ought to ſhock the ears of a Grecian; for ſuch are the perſonal good qualities of ARTAXERXES, ſuch his juſtice and moderation, ſuch the prudence of his counſels, that I am perſuaded the intereſt of Greece could not be conſulted better."

To detain thee no longer with a circumſtantial ſtory, I required him to interchange pledges of ſecrecy; (and I own, GOBRYAS, I trembled, when I did ſo;) he promiſed accordingly to preſerve his faith with me inviolate. I opened to him my credentials from Suſa, expreſſed to him in the handſomeſt manner the affection of the king for him, and acquainted him with the large preſent I was commanded to make him, on condition, that he would uſe his utmoſt efforts to prevent the Athenians from making peace with Lacedæmon; a meaſure advantageous to Athens, as it would break the power of the Peloponneſus,

ponneſus, and deſirable to Perſia, as it would be an ample revenge, for the ſeveral indignities offered by that petulant republic to our mighty monarch. CLEON conſented, and appointed to meet me, in order to receive the money, in the grove of olives under the walls of the citadel at midnight. When the conference was over, I went home, and at the ſilent hour I have mentioned, conveyed the talents to the place agreed on, where, after waiting a few minutes, I diſcerned CLEON at a little diſtance, by the pale light of the moon, advancing towards me in diſguiſe. When we met, we adminiſtred to each other a ſolemn oath of fidelity. I told him, that my life was in his power, gave him the money*, and immediately left the traitor with contempt, though not without ſome pleaſure, when I reflected

* Though none of the hiſtorians mention this material circumſtance of CLEON's taking a bribe from the Perſian court to prolong the war, there is a remarkable paſſage in a comedy of ARISTOPHANES, called the Peace, (acted about five years after the negotiation between CLEON and our Epheſian is ſuppoſed to have happened,) which in all probability alludes to ſome ſuch ſtory. At leaſt it appears from thence, that it was a pretty general notion amongſt the Athenians, that the influence of foreign gold was the true cauſe, which prevented the concluſion of a treaty with Sparta, at a juncture, when very honourable terms might have been obtained. I ſhall ſubmit the whole paſſage to the judgment of the learned reader. The poet introduces MERCURY giving an account to TRYGÆUS a vine dreſſer, and a Chorus of Athenian ruſtics, of the ſecret ſprings of thoſe commotions, which had ſet Greece in a flame.

flected on the ſucceſs of my commiſſion. I returned to my houſe, but was ſo haunted by the apprehenſions of my own mind, as not to lye down on my couch that evening with tranquillity; nor can I remain longer in Athens, without perpetual alarms of a diſcovery.

Generous GOBRYAS, forgive the anxiety of thy ſlave; indulge him in diſcloſing it to thee as his friend, not as a member of the ſupreme council. Suffer him to wiſh, however expedient this meaſure might be, either that himſelf had not been the artful inſtrument in performing it, or that it had been unneceſſary for the affairs of Perſia, to adviſe it. Henceforward I renounce all enjoyment or ſatisfaction in this city. I walk not in the ſtreets about common buſineſs, without looking behind me every ſtep I take; nor do I frequent public places with the ſame freedom, as I uſed. When I view the countenance of PHILEMON, it affects me with ſhame; and that of CLEON ſtrikes me with horror and averſion. Let me be recalled from ſo dangerous a ſituation, where it is at the mercy of him, who has betrayed the intereſts of his country for the Median gold, to aſſaſſinate, or ſpare the man, who ſeduced him. I beſeech thee to ſolicit the king on my behalf; repreſent to him, that the deſign of my negotiation is completed

Οἱ δὲ τὰς πληγὰς ὀρῶντες, ἃς ἴτυπτον, οἱ ξένοι,
Χρυσίῳ τῶν ταῦτα ποιούντων ἐβύων τὸ στόμα,
Ὡς' ἐκείνης μὲν πλησίως· ἡ δ' Ἑλλὰς ἂν
Ἐξερημωθεῖσ' ἂν ὑμᾶς ἴλαθι. ταῦτα δ' ἦν ὁ δρῶν
Ὁ βυρσοπώλης. Vide Ariſtoph. p. 354. l. 653. &c. Edit. Kuſteri.

in

in prolonging the war. In the mean time permit me to implore the gracious OROMASDES, that no pillar of infamy may be erected to my memory in Athens; that the hiſtories of Greece may not tranſmit the character of CLEANDER, as a ſecond ARTHMIUS, in the ſame page with CLEON to poſterity; or that my name may never be dragged from it's chaſte and ſpotleſs obſcurity into a known and hated ignominy.

C.

LETTER CXLVII.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS.

AFTER having frequently written to thee on ſubjects of a chearful or literary nature, and ſpeculated on points, which concern either the philoſophy of the Greeks, or the legiſlator of the Magi, I ſit down in a diſconſolate condition, to relate the anguiſh of my own heart, and to implore the ſuccours of thy divine inſtruction for CLEANDER the deſponding. Wilt thou not blame me, O thou fountain of the pureſt truth, for tranſgreſſing the law, in not conſulting thee in an affair of a dubious nature, before I determined in what manner I ſhould act? I pray thee to inform me, if the book does not allow it in caſes of neceſſity; or to enjoin me ſome penance, which may cancel this enormity. Conſider only the deſign of my employment, whether every command from the court of Perſia, enjoining me to perform a difficult and ſecret task for the intereſt of my country, is not to be immediately executed? And what though ſuch commands may now and then

be inconſiſtent with the letter of the Zendeviſt; yet I truſt they are not with the ſpirit of that volume; and a blind obedience to them will meet with pardon from our holy prophet. Suppoſe then, it were given me in charge, to advance the glory of my prince, as far as lay in my power, on the ruin of a deſerving people, who are ſo far from having done him an injury, that they have received many injuries from him or his anceſtors. Suppoſe, in conſequence of this charge, I am conſtrained to practiſe every art of fraud, flattery, cruelty, and falſe friendſhip; to make myſelf a ſlave to the paſſions of ſome, to tempt and gratify their covetouſneſs, to add fuel to their prodigality; ought I to be drawn by any conſideration into theſe inordinate vices, with a view only to indulge the ambition, or to aggrandize the dominions of that prince? Suppoſe too, that I have not only pryed into the policy and behaviour of the people, I am ordered to reſide with, but have been an actor as well as a ſpectator in the game, and by undue methods, have contrived to perpetuate the miſeries and deſolation of a civil war.

I know not, whether the written doctrines of ZERDUST can be urged, to vindicate my conduct; but methinks it is not to be reconciled with the unwritten law of univerſal benevolence, which has been wrought by the finger of providence into our very make and conſtitution. We are told by that law, that every private inclination ſhould give way to the love of our country; and a partial attachment to our country ſhould yield to a diſintereſted regard for mankind. This is the perfection of our nature: and ſurely the written commands,

mands of the Deity muſt agree with the unwritten, unleſs you would contend, that one revelation has annulled the precepts of another.

I mean not, venerable SMERDIS, to perplex thee with my doubts, but to receive illuminations on theſe important queſtions from thy ſublime genius. Forgive the diſtraction and the infirmity of a broken mind. In theſe circumſtances, the expiatory feaſt of CHURDÂD gives me no relief. Let me beſeech thee to recite conſtantly in thy morning and evening worſhip, the prayer of confeſſion, the ſacred Pitûpht, becauſe of the tranſgreſſions of thy friend; and, while thou art humanely employed in acts of ſanctity and devotion, to procure me a paſsport over that bridge, which every mortal muſt arrive at, I will make a fire-temple of my own heart, in which I will offer up the living flame of repentance to the great OROMASDES. Thus may I be at laſt perſuaded to entertain ſome hopes, that the angels will not turn me naked into a ſtate of horror after death, but that the five ſiſters ſhall weave for me, in common with all true believers, an everlaſting mantle.

C.

LETTER CXLVIII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. From Athens.

I Intended, noble ſcribe, according to thy orders, to have ſent away CHARICLES immediately, with a relation of the conferences between CLEON and myſelf; but, on better conſideration, I thought it more adviſeable to put off his departure for ſome days, till a judg-

ment might be formed, as well of the iſſue of the negotiations, as of CLEON's abilities and ſincerity in performing his engagements. I can now venture to affirm with certainty, that the inſtructions lately received are fully carried into execution, and that the Perſian court will have as clear and comprehenſive a view of the ſtate of affairs in this country, as it is in my power to give them; and muſt humbly offer my opinion, that in the criſis, to which things are arrived, it is high time for them to take a final reſolution, in regard to the party, with which they may think it their intereſt to cloſe.

When the Lacedæmonian embaſſadors arrived in town, they preſented their credentials to the Prytanes, and deſired an audience of the people, to whom they would explain the reaſons of their coming. An aſſembly was accordingly appointed within two days after. This intervening time they ſpent in viſiting their friends, and conferring with them on the forms of making their overtures of peace, and the means of rendering them effectual, not only by the force of arguments, but (what is moſt material in popular governments) the weight of numbers. Whilſt the embaſſadors were forming their cabals, and feeling the pulſes of the people, the oppoſite party, with as much zeal and more clamor, held hourly conſultations, ſtirring up and alarming the minds of ſuch, as deſired the continuance of the war, and exclaiming againſt the craft of the Lacedæmonians, who were now endeavouring to deceive enemies, whom they could not conquer, by ſending thoſe, who, under pretence of being miniſters of peace, ſhould corrupt bad men by bribes, and amuſe the

the honeſt, though credulous citizens, with fallacious, general, and trifling conditions. During this interval, I reminded CLEON, that he never would have ſo favourable an opportunity of recommending himſelf to the king, and conſulting at the ſame time his own intereſt, as by ſtopping theſe negotiations in the firſt inſtance. He aſſured me, that he ſpared no induſtry in oppoſing them, adding, in his bold manner of ſpeaking, that he would himſelf go to Suſa, and offer his head to ARTAXERXES, if things did not go well.

On the tenth of this month Hecatombeon, the embaſſadors were introduced into the aſſembly; and PISANDER, the firſt in commiſſion, made a ſpeech to the people, in which, without departing from the dignity of his countrymen, or making any ſubmiſſions of ſuch a nature, as would raiſe the arrogance of the Athenians, he told them truly and frankly; "that the deſire of ſaving the Spartans in Sphacteria was the motive, that induced his ſtate to treat; and that, provided the garriſon there might be permitted to return home, the Lacedæmonians and their allies were ready to conclude a peace, on ſafe, honourable, and advantageous terms for all parties. He concluded, by warning the people againſt preſuming too far on their good fortune; told them, it would be in their power, by eſtabliſhing a firm union among the Greeks, to give the law to other nations; and that himſelf and his collegues would think it the greateſt happineſs, that could befal them, if it ſhould lye in their power to contribute any thing towards ſo uſeful an end!'

When this harangue was ended, the embaſſadors were directed to withdraw; and the debate began on the

queſtion, whether the propoſals of the embaſſadors were ſufficient ground to treat upon. PHILEMON was the firſt, who ſpoke to it; he ſet out, agreeably to his uſual piety, by telling his countrymen, "that they ought to thank the Gods for the ſubject and occaſion of this day's debate; that after the havock made among them by the plague, which they had ſcarcely recovered, and the loſſes they had ſuſtained in the field, he could not help looking upon it as a ſingular inſtance of the divine protection, that an enemy, who had been ſometimes ſuperior, always equal to them in point of ſtrength and authority in Greece, ſhould come to ask a peace at their own doors. How far that meaſure was a wiſe and neceſſary one, he might ſafely leave to the judgment of thoſe, who wiſhed well to, and underſtood the true intereſt of Athens. He would only ſay, that if increaſing the annual expence, money taken up at large intereſt, decay of commerce, ruin of their eſtates by the neglect of agriculture, and other diſadvantages, which the continuance of the war brought upon them, could recommend peace to any ſtate; it was moſt deſirable to them. With regard to the preliminary, which the embaſſadors inſiſted on, he thought it not unreaſonable; and as it would tend to reſtore a mutual confidence, and be a pledge of their forwardneſs to heal the diſtractions of Greece, he was heartily for it.

When NICIAS aroſe, beſides enlarging on the topics, which PHILEMON had touched, he ſaid, 'he thought there could be no ſtronger argument in favour of treating' than that many of thoſe, who, like himſelf, had been bred to arms, and whoſe intereſt, conſequently, might be

be thought to lye in keeping the ſtate engaged in war, were yet for putting an end to it. With regard to releaſing the Spartans in Sphacteria, he did not think it was giving the enemy any advantage, becauſe, as he was juſt come from the army, he could aſſure them, that they would loſe more men, by making a deſcent upon the iſland, than the conqueſt of it was worth; for the garriſon had ſtrongly fortified themſelves in it, and would ſell their lives very dear. That continuing the blockade much longer muſt be impracticable; the coaſt would not furniſh proviſions for the fleet; and in caſe, the weather proved ſtormy, as the ſeaſon grew more advanced, their guard ſhips would not be able to keep their ſtations: and though it might be objected, that the Lacedæmonians themſelves muſt be firſt ſtarved out, he was of opinion, that ſeveral methods might be found out to ſupply them; barks with proviſions from the continent might be run aſhore on the iſland during the night, notwithſtanding all the vigilance of the Athenian commanders; and thoſe, who were acquainted with the Lacedæmonians, knew, that their ſoldiers could live harder than the troops of any other nation in the world."

EPIGENES, one of CLEON's orators, diſtinguiſhed himſelf much on the oppoſite ſide; he argued, "that he thought this whole buſineſs a piece of policy in the Lacedæmonians, to get their men again. When once, ſaid he, Athenians, you have complied with the propoſals of the embaſſadors, you may depend upon it, it will be no difficult matter to find out a pretence, however ſlight, to break off the negotiation. Had they an intention of proceeding ſincerely, PISANDER, in his ſpeech

ſpeech to you, ſhould have opened ſomething further of the conditions, which his ſtate propoſed to treat upon. Then you might have judged, whether you ought to have given up the fair proſpect you have of ſucceſs by your arms, to the hopes of concluding a ſecure and laſting peace." When CLEON found, that this reaſoning made no ſmall impreſſion upon the aſſembly, he roſe himſelf; and, after a long and virulent abuſe on the conduct of Sparta towards Athens for the courſe of many years, more particularly, by refuſing to liſten to any terms of accommodation, during the violence of the plague in the ſecond year of the war, he added, " that the Athenians had now an opportunity of returning the ill uſage they had received from them: that though, in his own opinion, he could not help being againſt throwing away all the expences of a tedious war, by concluding a peace at the very juncture, that they were going to reap the fruits of them; he would, notwithſtanding, ſo far comply with the deſires of many well-intentioned citizens, as to give his own vote for a treaty, provided it was begun on ſafe grounds. That he could not help entertaining the ſame ſuſpicion of the overture, with his worthy friend EPIGENES; and therefore moved, " that before any negotiation was ſet on foot with the Lacedæmonians, the garriſon of Sphacteria ſhould ſurrender themſelves priſoners of war into the hands of the Athenian generals, and be kept at Athens, till the Lacedæmonians had reſtored Niſæa, Pegæ, and Troezen, (all places which the Athenians had abandoned by the laſt treaty;) and on this foundation, a firm and laſting peace might be concluded."

This

This queſtion, after a long and warm debate, was carried in preference to the other; and then the embaſſadors were called in, and acquainted with the reſolution of the aſſembly. They deſired time to conſider of it, till the next morning, when they delivered in an anſwer to this effect; that, in purſuance of their inſtructions, they were obliged to inſiſt on the preliminary of reſtoring an entire freedom to the Lacedæmonians in Sphacteria; but they were ſo confident, that the propoſals, which they had to offer, were ſuch, as would appear juſt and honourable to the Athenians themſelves, that they deſired commiſſioners might be appointed to confer with them, and hear what they had to ſay. CLEON appeared more violent than ever againſt treating upon this reply of the embaſſadors; he told the people, "it was plain, what their enemies aimed at; they were conſcious, their propoſals would not bear the examination of the aſſembly; and, therefore choſe to treat with particular perſons, whom they might gain an influence over, flattering themſelves with hopes, that the people would be induced to ratify what thoſe commiſſioners ſhould conclude among themſelves."

NICIAS, in ſupporting the embaſſador's requeſt, again inſiſted on the difficulties of taking Sphacteria; upon which CLEON roſe with great paſſion, and ſaid, "every body knew, raſhneſs was not the fault of that general; and perhaps too much confidence might ſeem his: however, he knew ſo much of the ſtate of the iſland, and the ſtrength of their own army, that he would undertake, if they would give him the command, on forfeit of his life and reputation, to bring the Lacedæmonian

cedæmonian garriſon back with him to Athens in twenty days." This offer occaſioned great clamors in the aſſembly, and every body ſeemed amazed at ſo confident an aſſertion from one, who had never been much converſant in military affairs. During the diſturbance NICIAS got up, and voluntarily offered to reſign his general-ſhip, if CLEON would undertake the exploit. The other, who began to think, that in the heat of his diſcourſe he had gone a little too far, ſeemed now willing to decline it, and made ſome faint attempts towards excuſing the peremptorineſs and extravagance of his project; but the people ſtill inſiſted, that NICIAS ſhould reſign his office to him, and he ſhould immediately ſail to Pylus, and make his words good. The motion for commiſſioners was rejected with diſdain; and the Lacedæmonian embaſſadors ſeeing nothing was to be obtained from a people intoxicated with the ſlighteſt ſucceſs, ſet out ſoon after on their return to Sparta.

Thus, noble ſcribe, are the king's views fully anſwered by a renewal of the war, with ſuch exaſperating circumſtances on the part of Athens, as muſt, in the end, throw Sparta into the arms of Perſia. For beſides the abrupt manner, in which the aſſembly ſtopt the firſt overtures of a treaty, I am informed, that directions are diſpatched by the ſenate to the Athenian commanders, not to reſtore the Lacedæmonian ſhips in their poſſeſſion, as it was ſtipulated ſhould be done, when the truce expired, upon pretence, that the Lacedæmonians have in ſome articles infringed it. 'Tis certain, this is a contrivance of CLEON, to render the

two

two ſtates more irreconcilable. That worthy patriot has ſince been elected in form to the office of general in the room of NICIAS, who is much blamed by his friends for his haſty and imprudent reſignation. CLEON ſails in a few days, to join the fleet at Sphacteria, with ſupplies of men and money. His enemies ſeem to be extremely well ſatisfied with his taking the command upon himſelf; for by this means, ſay they, we ſhall either get rid of ſo turbulent a citizen, if he meets with ill ſucceſs; or, if the arms of the republic proſper in his hands, (which does not ſeem probable,) we ſhall give a ſenſible blow to the Lacedæmonians.

CLEON viſited me laſt night; and after giving a looſe to his vanity, by the applauſe he very freely beſtowed upon himſelf, for defeating with ſo much art the deſign of thoſe, who intended his ruin by concluding a peace, he informed me, that he was juſt come from the ſenate, where a letter of PYTHON had been read, which gave an account of the arrival of the Lacedæmonian embaſſadors at Perſepolis; and that it was the general talk of the court, that the treaty was on the point of being concluded with them. "It is impoſſible, continued he with much warmth, to ſerve ARTAXERXES here, whilſt he adds the power of his arms to the ſcale of our enemies. Do your miniſtry conſider, that this unſeaſonable declaration will make the tide run ſo ſtrong at Athens in favor of peace, that it will not be in the power of me, or any man elſe, to ſtop it? Or can they think it conſiſtent with the marks of eſteem and generoſity I have received from the king, to put the finiſhing ſtroke to ſo important an affair,

without giving at leaſt the refuſal of their alliance to one, who would uſe his utmoſt endeavours to bring it to paſs."

I endeavoured to moderate his warmth, by acknowledging "there was much weight in what he ſaid, and that I would do him juſtice by repreſenting it in the ſtrongeſt light to my own court. That as I had not lately heard out of Perſia, I could neither confirm, nor contradict the truth of PYTHON's intelligence. It might probably happen, that he had taken up with the common rumours of the court, which are not always to be depended upon. That, however, it was not to be wondered at, if the miniſters of the great king were ready to ſign a treaty with Sparta, when he himſelf muſt allow, that though they had made ſeveral openings towards entering into a cloſer friendſhip with this ſtate, none but general anſwers could be had in return; the commerce of Perſia had been interrupted, and a rebel ſuffered to fit out ſhips in the Piræeus for the annoyance of the king's dominions."

After ſome further altercations between us on theſe ſubjects, he departed with aſſuring me, that he had a great probability in ſucceeding in his expedition; that DEMOSTHENES was clearly of opinion, a deſcent on the iſland was no ſuch impracticable thing, as NICIAS had repreſented it; and if once he ſet foot on ſhore, he would ſhew the Athenians, that it was not growing grey under an helmet, or being perfect in the various figures of the Phalanx, that capacitated men to command armies.

Such

Such is the arrogant converſation of this bold Athenian; who, whatever outward profeſſions he may make, would, with difficulty, exchange the talents of Suſa, which he may hoard in his coffers, for all the aſſiſtance, that the fleets of Phœnicia could afford to his countrymen.

Noble ſcribe, I ſhould beg pardon for the length of this diſpatch, if the importance of the matters it contains, would have ſuffered it to be drawn into leſs compaſs. May the helm of the ſtate, where thou preſideſt, long continue to be conducted by thy ſalutary counſels. P.

LETTER CXLIX.

CLEANDER to ORSAMES.

I Have ſometimes talked to thee of a ſet of men, who travel over Greece, and are fond of fixing themſelves in Athens, called the Sophiſts. A very remarkable challenge, given out by one of them the other day, made me curious of ſeeing the event. PROTAGORAS publickly invited the city to hear him diſpute in the Lycæum upon any poſſible queſtion, that could be propoſed to him in any branch of ſcience. "No doubt of it, ſaid I to myſelf, this man muſt be a prodigy of parts, as well as learning; who, after having informed himſelf in all things to be known, can retain them with ſuch accuracy, and produce them with ſuch readineſs, as to be capable of confuting every antagoniſt, even under the diſadvantage of defending the wrong

wrong ſide of the argument. How am I to be blamed, continued I, who have lived here ſo long, without applying for improvement to this great genius, or being ranked in the number of his followers."

My mind was full of theſe reflections, when I had the good fortune to meet ALCIBIADES. I expreſſed to him my admiration of the ſophiſt's ſuperior wiſdom, or ſuperior confidence. "Come along with me, anſwered he, and you ſhall ſee, how our friend SOCRATES will deal with him. We ſhall have much entertainment from his ironies, for I have juſt been perſuading him to go to the place of diſputation." "With all my heart, returned I; but give me leave to ask you, whence aroſe this practice among the ſophiſts of expoſing themſelves to the triumph and ridicule, not only of true philoſophers, but of rude mechanics? It is a rule, you know, at the games, never to match a Pentathlos againſt him, who has been continually employed in one exerciſe. But the ſophiſt gives an univerſal defiance; he claims the benefit of no reſtriction." "The riſe of it is very ſingular, replied ALCIBIADES. I remember, when GORGIAS came here many years ago, in the character of a private teacher of eloquence, he envied PRODICUS, and uſed to laugh at the credit he had acquired by his allegory of the judgment of HERCULES." "This fool, ſaid he, to one of his friends, who told me the ſtory, has got a leſſon by heart, and cons it over in every noted city of Greece. Then he plumes himſelf upon obtaining the name of ORPHEUS; begins to fancy, that he is placed on the ſame footing with the ancient civilizers and reformers

formers of mankind; and believes he ſhall be figured to poſterity with an harp, ſoftening the wild beaſts, and moving trees and rocks by the magic of his harmony. He has ſhewn ſcarce any learning or invention beyond this fable, which has raiſed his reputation, unleſs it be in the famous lecture *, that reveals the whole myſtery of grammar, to which he is indebted for his wealth. By JUPITER, added he, the impudence and ſolemnity of a man's pretenſions gain him more admirers, than the modeſty or juſtice of them." He went immediately into the forum, as it were to exemplify his laſt words, and proclaimed his abilities and willingneſs to debate any point of learning, that could be offered him on the ſpot. As he has a great command of expreſſion, the thing ſucceeded to his wiſh; and the good people of Athens were aſtoniſhed at the power of his eloquence. Since that, the reſt of the ſophiſts, not caring to yield the ſuperiority to GORGIAS, have taken up the thing in imitation of him." "Indeed, ſaid I, the practice and it's origin are worthy of one another, and contend the palm in abſurdity. I can eaſily conceive a reaſon, why the younger ſophiſts ſhould fall in with this odd humour of the city, and endeavour to make themſelves known by their extempore performances. But PROTAGORAS has been long at the head of his ſect, and is a maſter of ſenſe as well as language. I think it ſtrange—. "I beſeech you, inter-

* PRODICUS read a grammatical lecture, to which no one was admitted under 50 drachms. SOCRATES ſpeaks of it in PLATO's Axiochus, and calls it τὴν πεντηκόντα δραχμῶν ἐπίδειξιν.

poſed ALCIBIADES, think nothing ſtrange. I find you are not ſo well acquainted with PROTAGORAS as I am. Before we get to the Lycæum, I ſhall deſcribe two or three features of the man to you, which will be as good as a picture at full length of him. It ſeems he is the inventor of a logical fallacy, by which an argument may be turned two oppoſite ways, and be valid in both. EUATHLUS (whoſe family you may have heard of in Athens) had a ſtrong paſſion to become a celebrated orator, and agreed with PROTAGORAS for a certain ſum, that all the ſecrets of the art ſhould be opened to him. The ſcholar paid half the price, on being admitted to his maſter, and ſtipulated for the payment of the reſt, provided that he gained the firſt cauſe, which he ſhould plead as an advocate at the bar. PROTAGORAS, without delay, informed him in all things neceſſary; and having trained him ſufficiently to the exerciſe of the rules, which he gave him, exhorted the young man earneſtly to appear in public. EUATHLUS, either willing to defer diſcharging his debt, or diffident of his capacity, ſhewed no reſpect to the counſels of the ſophiſt. The ſophiſt reſolved to have his money, and cited EUATHLUS before a court of judicature. He thought this an undoubted method of extorting it, and could not help inſulting his pupil. "If, ſays he, the judges determine in my favor, then you will be obliged to pay me by their determination. If not, you win your firſt cauſe, and become my debtor by the terms of the agreement." "You are miſtaken, cried the young man, and I allow your alternative. If the deciſion is in my favor, you have no claim to the

debt

debt by that deciſion. If not, then I loſe my firſt cauſe, and the terms of our agreement acquit me. The court and the audience, who expected a very eloquent conteſt between the ſophiſt and his ſcholar, burſt out into a loud laugh at their ſubtlety. The judges left the queſtion unſettled, and PROTAGORAS began to repent, that EUATHLUS had been inſtructed ſo well by him. "And in truth, replied I, he had reaſon. To be grave with you, I wiſh all the philoſophers, like SOCRATES, would endeavour to bring theſe teachers of falſe ſcience into general diſcredit, and ſhame them out of Greece. It would have a conſiderable effect, I am perſuaded, on the advancement of real knowledge, and on the manners of the times. What gives me a diſlike to ſeveral of them, is their intolerable avarice. If a rich man is diſpoſed to be kind to them, they preach up generoſity, and cry down ſilver and gold, as of no more value than the pebbles on the ſea-ſhore. Yet if an indigent friend intreats aſſiſtance from them, they recant all they have ſaid, in favor of the virtue they have now an opportunity of exerting; ſo that humanity, gratitude, and private conſcience, have no weight with them. They have a regard for one another, while their intereſts interfere not: but if an obolus be held up to them as matter of contention, their mutual friendſhip would be diſſolved, their leſſons of virtue forgot, and they would engage in a quarrel for it." "Your conceit of the obolus, ſaid ALCIBIADES, calls to my memory an Egyptian king, who had taught ſome monkeys (for they have a wonderful aptneſs in burleſquing the human race) to dance together in

chorus, and when they were dreſſed up in purple robes and vizor masks, had frequently produced them in public, with ſucceſs. At laſt, a facetious ſpectator one day threw an handful of nuts among them, which cauſed them to neglect their dance, tear their clothes, throw off their masks, recover the natural manners of their ſpecies, and fight with one another. But your reflections and my ſimilies break in unſeaſonably on another ſtory I was going to tell you. A lively young fellow of my acquaintance, who was formerly a follower of PROTAGORAS, gave me a pleaſant account of the audience he firſt had of him. His father, a plain illiterate citizen, accidentally heard the ſophiſt one day at a diſputation; and whether the old gentleman (as many do) admired what he did not comprehend, or whether he heard him ſpeak on ſome popular ſubject, that ſtruck his fancy, he determined to place his ſon under the care of ſo excellent a tutor. Accordingly he carried my friend one day to PROTAGORAS, and took the liberty of asking, what improvement he would teach him? "I ſhall teach him the utmoſt attainment of the human mind, replied the ſophiſt, that of ſpeaking without preparation, on any ſubject that ſhall be given him. "What, ſaid the old man, though he does not underſtand it?" "Yes, anſwered the other, or I am no maſter of eloquence. He ſhall be qualified in a little time, to turn the wiſeſt aſſembly to any opinion, he would chuſe for them, by the mere energy of words. He ſhall have it in his power, to repreſent things of great conſequence, as of no concern; and things of no conſequence, as of the greateſt. He ſhall know, how

to

to depreciate the beſt, and colour over the worſt cauſe with plauſibility." "Hold, hold, cried the father; by all the Gods, this is more than my ſon ſhall ever learn. But PROTAGORAS, have you the face to tell me, for inſtance, you can perſuade any man, that ſociety may ſubſiſt without juſtice." "Are you deſirous to diſpute upon it, replied the ſophiſt. I ſhall convince you preſently, that there is no difficulty in the thing." Would you believe it, CLEANDER, they entered into an argument, in which, you may gueſs, the ſophiſt very ſoon got the better. "You amaze me, ſaid the new diſputant, this is a ſerious matter, and fit for the cognizance of the ſtate; if I had the honour to be a magiſtrate, give me leave to tell you, that a fellow, who can prate truth, honeſty, and juſtice out of countenance, ſhould not ſtay one hour in the city." "Softly, I beſeech you, replied PROTAGORAS. But though you are unable to do it, I can confute myſelf with facility." In a word, he performed that office ſo readily and elegantly, and ſo much to the ſatisfaction of the father, that he began to be better reconciled to him; and, before the converſation broke up, recommended his ſon to him. At the ſame time he ſtrictly enjoined the ſophiſt, to conceal from him the faculty of impoſing on others, what is wrong: "or if, continued he, the ſame arts are neceſſary for the recommendation of truth and falſhood, be careful to inſtil into him ſuch principles of virtue, that, however he may uſe them to the one purpoſe, he may ſcorn to abuſe them to the other."

In this manner I was entertained with the eaſy flow of converſation, and good humour, peculiar to ALCIBIADES, till we arrived at the Lycæum.

C.

LETTER CL.

CLEANDER to ORSAMES.

WHEN we came to the Lycæum, we found SOCRATES there, and a great concourſe of people gathered about the ſophiſt. Our excellent friend began with ſaying, "that he was by no means qualified, much leſs pretended, to cope with the art and eloquence of the celebrated PROTAGORAS. He told us, that he appeared in this place, not to anſwer the challenge, (which would be as abſurd in him, againſt a perſon of ſuch skill in his profeſſion, as for a mean wreſtler, to have accepted that of MILO * at the Olympic games;) but to intreat his inſtructions publicly, on what he uſed to teach privately to his ſcholars, as well for himſelf, as for a numerous and admiring audience." The ſophiſt anſwered with propriety enough, "that he taught his pupils a ſcience, of which he underſtood SOCRATES to be a great maſter, the ſcience of virtue." "And is then virtue to be taught?" ſaid SOCRATES. "Yes, like all other arts, which contribute to the perfection of mankind." "I ſuppoſe, replied the philoſopher, you mean, that it is as reducible to a ſyſtem, as grammar and arithmetic." "Moſt clearly." "And is

* See Letter LXXII.

that

that ſyſtem neceſſary to be known, before we are proficients in virtue?" "Yes." "Then why do the illiterate attempt to judge of actions, as well as the learned?" "Becauſe they, who know little, are always leaſt ſenſible of their own weakneſs." "Let it be granted. But how comes it, that in the aſſemblies of the people, when a debate is ſtarted on the public buildings or navigation, none interfere, or paſs a judgment, except thoſe, who have qualified themſelves, by a particular ſtudy of them, under the care of conſummate artiſts. Yet when a queſtion is moved, depending on civil policy, or any of the virtues, which ſupport and adorn life, moſt men of common ſenſe have ſomething to ſay, which is material, though they are not indebted for their knowledge in theſe matters to the ſchools of ſophiſts or philoſophers? Or whence is it, that when the rules of grammar and arithmetic will extend themſelves effectually to all the combinations of words or numbers, the general precepts of virtue, laid down by the teachers of wiſdom, are ſo imperfect, as that many of the various intricacies and accidents of the moral world cannot be comprehended by them? In the former we are ſeldom perplexed, but in the latter we are frequently diſtracted, when we would reconcile the narrow reaſonings of theories with the latitude of practice." "I ſuſpend my anſwer, cried the ſophiſt, till I have collected your whole argument. And what is your inference from this?" "'Tis a plain one, ſaid SOCRATES: I mean to ask you, whether you think virtue can be taught, by adviſing a man to apply his reaſon to ſyſtematical ſpeculations, and not rather by

the exerciſe and government of his paſſions in action. Whether thoſe few principles, which are the great clues to lead us through the mazes of life, are implanted in every man's nature, or imparted only to the favourites of heaven, for their own lucre, and the uſe of ſome, who can purchaſe them." "Your objections to my poſition, ſaid the Sophiſt, cannot be anſwered more pertinently to the matter of them, or more entertainingly for thoſe, who hear us, than by an ancient fable.

* There was a time, when the Gods alone exiſted, and nothing mortal was created. But when fate had decreed, that this habitable frame of things ſhould be produced, it was given in charge to PROMETHEUS and EPIMETHEUS to ſupply each of the animal kinds, with thoſe faculties, which might be neceſſary for their convenience and ſupport. EPIMETHEUS deſired his partner in this office, to give him leave to perform it by himſelf; "at the ſame time, ſaid he, do you overlook and correct me." PROMETHEUS conſented. The other proceeded to his work immediately, and endued ſome creatures with ſtrength, and ſome with ſwiftneſs. He next diſtributed hoofs, hides, horns, briſtles; and nouriſhed all beaſts with graſs and roots, or with the leaves and fruits of trees. The folly of EPIMETHEUS, who had laviſhed his favours on brutes, had like to have proved fatal to man in this eſtabliſhment of things. The day approached, when all animals were to make their appearance. PROMETHEUS, concerned for his own honor, after many expreſſions

* Vide Platonem in Protagorâ.

of

of diſtreſs, reſolved to ſteal the invention of MINERVA, with the fire of VULCAN, and added them to the human compoſition. Thus man was enabled to conſult his own preſervation. But as to thoſe qualities, which improve civil life, and were neceſſary to conſtitute it, they were lodged in the citadel near the throne of JUPITER, whither PROMETHEUS durſt not aſcend. The human race by this means contracted an affinity with divine natures, and erected altars and ſtatues to them. They made a language, clothed themſelves, built cottages; but not being gathered into cities, they were expoſed to the fury and incurſions of wild beaſts. At laſt ſome of them attempted to compoſe a ſtate, and in ſo doing, they added to the havock by their diſſentions, inſtead of preventing it. JUPITER, out of his infinite benevolence, compaſſionated mankind, and ordered MERCURY to inſtil into them juſtice, charity, and all the ſocial virtues. MERCURY asked, whether they ſhould be diſtributed in unequal portions, like beauty and ſtrength. "Yes, ſaid JUPITER, let a few, who ſhall command and inform the reſt, be largely furniſhed with them; and for the generality, give them the ſeeds of theſe good qualities, but ſo as it ſhall require labor, education, and inſtruction to mature and bring them to perfection."

even

"Thus, SOCRATES, continued the Sophiſt, I would admit, that the principles of virtue are implanted in the minds of all men, but in ſuch an obſcure perplexed manner, that they muſt be cleared and drawn out by the leſſons of the wiſe, before moſt of us are able to apply them. Virtue is therefore to be taught, ſince the

pure

pure and diſtinct knowledge of it, which gives uniformity and ſteadineſs to our conduct, is not attainable by practice only. SIMONIDES has ſome fine verſes to this purpoſe." "I own, ſaid SOCRATES, I cannot help admiring the fluency of your tongue, and beauty of your elocution; though I am unable to follow the train of reaſoning in a long ſpeech, becauſe of my natural ſlowneſs of apprehenſion. You were going to cite the poems of SIMONIDES, which ſeem foreign to the ſtrictneſs of our argument; and it puts me in mind of thoſe, who knowing their own inability to entertain the company, would introduce a lutaniſt or dancer. As this obſervation extends not to you, PROTAGORAS, you will permit me to wave your verſes, and in order to bring our controverſy to a point, let me ask you, whether you do not admit, that the principles of virtue are implanted, though obſcurely, in the minds of men?" "I have ſaid ſo." "Does it require a regular and liberal education, to make them ſerviceable in life?" "Yes." "Can he be ſaid to act wholly by chance, who has never drawn them out clearly, or ſcarce beſtowed a moment's thought on them?" "Undoubtedly." "Then ſuch a one, either infected by the dangerous communication, or grown old in the deſperate habit of vice, is not puniſhable." "Certainly not." "Yet the laws of the community puniſh the vicious of all ranks." "True." "Did you ever know a criminal of the meaneſt education, who ſaid in excuſe of his crime, that he acted by chance, and knew not it was wrong?" "No." "Have not you often obſerved a man determine rightly of an action, who was ignorant of the principle, on which

which it's rectitude or depravity depended?" "Yes." "Then your own experience, and that of human nature, as well as the authority of our anceſtors, is againſt you; and you muſt admit virtue not to be a matter of ſcience, but that the illiterate and the learned are equally qualified to practiſe it?"

Thus PROTAGORAS concluded againſt the uſefulneſs of his profeſſion, before he knew, whither the reaſonings of SOCRATES, or the turn of his own argument, would draw him.

I dare ſay, thou haſt long joined with me, ORSAMES, in admiring the man, who has convinced the Greeks, that logic, and the diſputations of ſophiſts, are no more neceſſary to a ſound mind, than the exerciſes of racers and wreſtlers to an healthful body. That philoſophy is not like a prince, confined within the walls of a palace, happy in the contemplation of it's awful magnificence; but, like an active magiſtrate, watches over the welfare of ſociety, and frequents the forum and Piræeus, not the ſchools and walks of ſpeculating ſages. In truth, it is ſo free in declaring it's ſentiments, that a very little attention will inform us, what part it takes, not only in the general ſupport of virtue, and diſcouragement of vice, but in every particular ſcheme of action, that can divide the time, thoughts, or intereſts of men.

C.

LETTER

LETTER CLI.

SMERDIS to CLEANDER.

THY doubts, * CLEANDER, have caſt a gloom over theſe peaceful manſions. When from the top of the flowery Mount in my beloved hour of evening meditation, I caſt my eyes towards Greece, I no longer viewed the charming landſcape with delight. The glorious works of OROMASDES, diſplayed in every various beauty of creation, were clouded over by the evil influence of the wicked AHRIMAN. The dark perplexities, in which his baneful arts have involved the race of men, were the unpleaſing objects, which thy letter had placed ſtrongly before me. I conſidered Athens, as an infected place, whoſe tainted air the delicacy of virtue could not ſupport. White-handed Probity and dove-like Peace of Mind ſeemed on the wing towards ſome more happy region, where they ſhould no longer be ſubject to the harſh laws of imperious Neceſſity.

I pity thee, CLEANDER, ſincerely. There is an eternal law engraven upon the tablet of the heart by the omnipotent hand of YESDAN, which cannot be infringed without the ſevereſt anguiſh of mind. Even they, whoſe compliance with thy temptations makes thee now look on them with abhorrence, had once this ſacred law imprinted on their ſouls. No mortal bo-

* See Letter CXLVII.

ſom

ſom is void of the divine illuminations; but the firſt deviation from that innocence it inviolably preſcribes, throws a thin miſt over the radiance. By frequent repetitions of guilt, the obſcurity grows thicker and darker; and the wretch comes at laſt to give up every ſacred tie, without compunction, to the ſordid views of avarice and ambition.

Beware, CLEANDER, how thou permitteſt the leaſt acceſs in thy ſoul to that encroaching principle of evil; nor ſtrive to reconcile a doubtful action with the juſt laws of the ſage ZERDHUHST. No, there is no danger ſo fatal, as palliating evil into an appearance of good. The laws of ZOROASTER are but a tranſcript of that native law, which OROMASDES has written in thy heart. That heart is revolted at the idea of corruption. Thy hand draws back of itſelf from offering the infamous bait, which Grecian avarice ſo greedily reaches after. Yet this abhorrence ſeems to thy reaſon contrary to that unlimited obedience, that abſolute devotion of ſervice, which is due to the monarch of the earth. Here thy human ſight is dazzled, thy head turns round, and the precipice is beneath thy feet. From it's brink thou lookeſt back to the ſchools of Balch; thou calleſt for aſſiſtance from the Bactrian groves. This ſtruggle of a virtuous mind is much to be commended. May a gracious emanation from the ſource of light aſſiſt thee, to diſtinguiſh that narrow path, which, amongſt the perplexed mazes of human policy, is alone conſiſtent with his original dictates. Human wiſdom, CLEANDER, even in theſe retirements, where it is not diſturbed by the tumult of the paſſions,

or

or diſtreſt by the intricacies of affairs, can go no farther, than to point out ſome few certain and immutable truths. Where, in their conſequences, they appear to claſh, it muſt be a ſuperior power, that can demonſtrate their eternal conſiſtency, ſince to obſcure that conſiſtency with falſe appearances, is the utmoſt effort of the potent ARIMANIUS.

All we can then adviſe is, to withdraw from thoſe paths, which are ſo overſpread with fatal ſnares, and ſeek for ſecurity in retreat. This is the only penance, that can be at all effectual, towards thy paſſing the eternal bridge in ſafety, and arriving in thoſe regions of the bleſſed, the certain, though diſtant, contemplation of which is the fragrant oil, that keeps alive the ſacred flame in the boſom of every true believer, with a brightneſs, to which the ſplendors of all earthly greatneſs are more dim than twilight, outvying even the radiance of the Perſian throne. While thy ſervices to that were conſiſtent with the univerſal law, thy virtue was heightened by it's exalted object. Thoſe ſervices have been long and faithful. It is now high time to gain a diſmiſſion from the arduous task. Wait not, I charge thee, for the tempting rewards of ambition; break off, without heſitating, every Grecian attachment; and follow timid Virtue to ſome humble cell. From thence thou mayſt look back with equal tranſport, on the duties ſo attentively performed, and the guilt ſo narrowly avoided. Leave theſe dark ſcenes to other actors: if OROMASDES has doomed the deſtruction of the Grecians, fear not, but he will find fit inſtruments to effect it, while thou ſhall look on in happy innocence; inſtruments,

ments, who ſhall perhaps find the puniſhment of their guilt, in the permiſſion of accumulating crimes. Farewel: may the ſource of light illuminate thy ſoul! No ritual obſervance ſhall be wanting on the part of thy friends, to atone for what is paſt.

T.

LETTER CLII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. From Perſepolis.

I Was ſome days in hopes, to have ſent you the agreeable news of our treaty with the Lacedæmonians being brought to an happy concluſion; but it has been broke off on the very point of ſigning, in a manner ſo extraordinary and unexpected, as leaves us entirely at a loſs, to account for the conduct of the Spartan republic. From this preamble thou wilt no doubt expect a detail of the negotiation, which was undoubtedly, in it's object, the moſt important, but proved, in it's iſſue, the moſt ſingular, that was ever entered in the chronicles of the empire. There was no pains ſpared to ſecure a good concluſion to the treaty, by a courteous and hoſpitable behaviour towards the perſons of thoſe, who negotiated it on the part of Lacedæmon, and a frankneſs and ſincerity on the ſide of the king's commiſſioners, in all the overtures they made to forward it. PLISTOLAS and PHARAX, the two new Spartan embaſſadors, were received by the governors of the provinces, through which they paſſed in their way to court, with all the reſpect, that could be ſhewn to

the

the repreſentatives of ſo conſiderable a republic. About two paraſangs from Perſepolis they were met by TISSAPHERNES, maſter of the horſe, the captain of the immortals, and ſeveral of the ſatraps; who conducted them to the palace prepared for their reception within the walls of the city. In the evening HYDASPES was ſent to welcome them in the king's name, and ſettle a time for their public audience, which was performed in full ſplendor a few days after. The ſpeech, which PLISTOLAS made to the king, when he delivered his credentials, was ſhort, but not without dignity or politeneſs. "Great monarch, we admire the magnificence of thy court, and the number of thy attendants; but are more ſtruck with the grace and majeſty of thy perſon. And we doubt not, but that in the management of the buſineſs, with which we are entruſted by our native city, we ſhall have reaſon to eſteem thy wiſdom in the choice of thy miniſters." The king anſwered them in few words, "that he could not but hope well of the ſucceſs of any negotiation, in which they were employed; that he would order ſome of his council, in whom he repoſed moſt confidence, to confer with them as often as they deſired it, and they ſhould find him not leſs deſirous of the alliance of Sparta, than that republic was of his."

When that day's ceremony was over, TERIBAZUS, ARTAPHERNES, and myſelf were appointed commiſſioners to treat with them. I endeavoured indirectly to have NICANDER ſet aſide, knowing, by experience, that he was an impracticable man, and would certainly throw obſtacles in our way; but was told, that their inſtructions

inſtructions enjoined them to do nothing without his advice. At our firſt meeting the embaſſadors put into our hands a declaration concerning the grounds of the quarrel with Athens; it repreſented the war to have taken it's riſe from the ambitious views of that ſtate, which had endeavoured, by oppreſſing their allies, embezzelling the public treaſure at Delos, and other unjuſtifiable methods, to overturn the independance of the Grecian commonwealths. The hard uſage of MEGARA and POTIDÆA, the ſuccours ſent to the Corcyreans, and the private intereſts and reſentments of PERICLES, were not forgot. It concluded, by expreſſing the hopes, which the republic of Sparta entertained, that the king would not deny them his aſſiſtance in the proſecution of ſo juſt a cauſe.

Thou may'ſt imagine, CLEANDER, it was not our intention to diſpute the facts alledged in this memorial; but after telling the embaſſadors, that we would lay it before the king for his conſideration, we added, that as no alliance could be laſting and ſincere, when the contracting parties did not find their mutual intereſts concerned, we thought the moſt proper way of bringing things to a fair and ſpeedy iſſue, would be for both ſides to communicate their reſpective projects of a treaty to each other, the conditions of which might be debated in ſubſequent conferences. They readily agreed to it, and the king's commiſſioners preſented the following paper *.

I. "That

* Such of our readers, as are not much verſed in ancient treaties, will not take it amiſs, to be told, that this project

I. "That there ſhould be a firm league and amity by ſea and land between ARTAXERXES, king of Perſia, and the republic of Lacedæmon."

II. "That during the continuance of the war againſt the Athenians and their allies, the king of Perſia ſhould aſſiſt the Lacedæmonians with a fleet of fourſcore ſail, to be employed in ſuch ſervices, either jointly or ſeparately, as ſhould moſt annoy the common enemy."

III. "That for the better encouragement of the Peloponneſian ſailors, the king of Perſia ſhould agree to raiſe their pay from three to four oboli a day."

IV. "That in conſideration of theſe ſuccours, the Lacedæmonians and their allies ſhould ſecure and guarantee to the king, and his ſucceſſors, the poſſeſſion of all the cities in Aſia, and their dependencies, which had formerly belonged to the king, or any of his royal predeceſſors."

V. "That they ſhould further promiſe, not to diſturb or moleſt the Perſian navigation, in any of thoſe ſeas, where it had been carried on in former times."

VI. "That in caſe of any invaſion from foreign enemies, or troubles from domeſtic rebels, they ſhould

agrees in the moſt material points, (particularly the article, which concerns the Aſiatic Greeks) with the alliances afterwards concluded between the Perſians and Lacedæmonians; of which there are ſeveral inſtances in the 8th book of THUCYDIDES, and the firſt of XENOPHON's Græcian hiſtory. So great, we may reaſonably ſuppoſe, was the reputation of the miniſtry of ARTAXERXES for wiſdom and integrity, that their ſucceſſors thought they could not regulate their conduct by ſounder maxims of policy. Note by the Tranſlator.

join

join the king's army with a body of ten thouſand Greeks, to be commanded by the Perſian generals."

VII. "It is further ſtipulated, that no treaty ſhould be entered into, or peace made, without common conſent."

The Lacedæmonian project differed from ours as to the proportion of ſuccours, in ſhips and money, which the king was to furniſh them with, and entirely omitted the two principal articles of a free navigation, and the guarantee of the Aſiatic colonies; only offering ten thouſand men, and thirty gallies, as their quota of aſſiſtance, in caſe of any attack upon the Perſian dominions.

At the next meeting, they were told by us, that we could by no means think the offers, they made, in any wiſe an equivalent for the advantages ſecured to their republic by the king's own propoſals; much leſs were they equal to the extravagant conditions ſet down in their project: that we were directed to tell them plainly, that unleſs they would repeal the two articles in CIMON's treaty, as expreſſed in our draught, it was loſing time to continue the conferences with them, and this negotiation muſt end as fruitleſly as the former.

NICANDER replied, that they were very ready to give us all reaſonable ſatisfaction, and they would not diſpute with us the point of a free navigation in thoſe ſeas, where it had been prohibited; but it was impoſſible for them to ſurrender in expreſs terms all the cities of Aſia, for whoſe liberties their anceſtors had fought, into our hands; ſince ſuch a condition would reflect a diſgrace on their republic, that could never be cancelled;

it would ſet their own allies againſt them, and for once make the cauſe of Athens popular in Greece. I told them, that it was but common juſtice to reſtore the king to his rights, when he was to aſſiſt them in vindicating theirs; that I could not comprehend, what offence their allies could take, at a ſtep neceſſary to ſecure to them the aſſiſtance of a powerful monarch; nor how the fate of Ionian colonies, allied to the Athenians, their enemies, could any ways affect the intereſt or reputation of Sparta. The diſpute between us continued for ſome time on a footing, that plainly ſhewed, that as we were content to increaſe our ſuccours, provided the two articles abovementioned were admitted, they on the contrary would be ſatisfied with a leſs proportion, if they could prevail to have them laid aſide. At laſt it was agreed, to refer the final deciſion of this matter to another conference. I obſerved, that PLISTOLAS and PHARAX took very little ſhare in the debate, leaving the management of it wholly to NICANDER, who appeared moſt prejudiced againſt our demands. Upon communicating this hint to my collegues, it was agreed, that we ſhould have a private converſation with PLISTOLAS, and endeavour to find out, whether they were not left more at liberty by their inſtructions, than they repreſented themſelves to be; and whether this extreme obſtinacy was not put on, in order to obtain the better bargain for the republic of Lacedæmon. PLISTOLAS readily came to me, and, after I had diſcourſed him on the preſent inability of his ſtate, and their allies, to proſecute the war vigorouſly without foreign aſſiſtance, I urged him to declare, whether they had not power to make us farther conceſſions; or elſe, I aſſured him, we had

orders

orders to break off the treaty, at the very next conference. He ſaid, there was a general clauſe in their inſtructions, directing them to adjuſt the intereſts of the Greek colonies in ſuch a manner, as might be leaſt diſhonourable to the republic, and beſt tend to ſtrengthen their alliance with the king; and he would confeſs to me, that he thought the articles, we propoſed, anſwered both thoſe proviſo's. But as they were tied down not to conclude any thing without the concurrence of all three, and NICANDER his collegue was obſtinate againſt admitting this article, he did not ſee what was to be done; that he would make one more effort to gain his concurrence, and acquaint me with the reſult of it. The next morning he ſent me a ſhort letter to this effect, "that NICANDER was at laſt convinced, it was better to comply with our demands, than put an end to the negotiation." This convinced my fellow-commiſſioners and myſelf, that nothing more was wanting, than to draw out the treaty in form, and ſign it without further trouble. But how much were we ſurprized, when at the next conference, after having read to the fourth article, NICANDER roſe, and ſaid, that upon further conſideration of the purport and ſenſe of his inſtructions, and the knowledge he had of the ſentiments of thoſe in the adminiſtration of affairs at Sparta, he thought himſelf obliged to retract the conſent, which his collegues had extorted from him, to an article inconſiſtent with the intereſt of Greece, and diſhonourable to his country! The other embaſſadors ſeeming not leſs concerned than us at this declaration, maintained, that the republic would ratify the article, as we

had offered it, ſince the cities in Aſia were not expreſly given up, but only included under the general deſcription of territories formerly belonging to Perſia. But NICANDER with great warmth declared, he had rather loſe his right hand, than ſet it to ſuch a treaty. Upon this perſonal altercation, we told them, that till they had ſettled amongſt themſelves a point of ſo great conſequence, nothing could be determined; that we had done all that lay in our power to facilitate the treaty, and were ſorry, that they had not proceeded with the frankneſs and ſincerity, which were expected from them. PLISTOLAS has ſince proteſted to me in the ſtrongeſt manner, that he could not imagine, what were NICANDER's reaſons for retracting; and to prove to me, that PHARAX and himſelf were really of opinion, that they ſhould not be diſowned by their principals, he has offered to ſign the treaty without NICANDER. But it has not been thought proper to accept this propoſal, becauſe of the clauſe in their inſtructions, which renders their unanimous concurrence in every particular neceſſary.

We have ſince received your letters, which contain an account of the truce concluded between the Lacedæmonians and Athenians, and the ſtrong diſpoſition, which appears in both ſides to put an end to the war. Several are of opinion, that the embaſſadors muſt have had ſome earlier notice of theſe tranſactions, though they have not acknowledged it to us; for they ſay, that NICANDER's retraction of his conſent, and the abſurd offer of PLISTOLAS and PHARAX, which, they knew, we could not with any ſecurity depend upon,

upon, bear all the marks of a diſingenuous piece of ſhuffling, contrived to palliate a change of meaſures, which was really occaſioned by an alteration of affairs at home. However we are not without hopes, that the inſtructions ſent by CHARICLES will have reached Athens time enough to enable you to prevent a final accommodation. In the mean time, till their ſucceſs is known, our counſels here are at a ſtand.

What you mention in your letter of the good effects, that may ariſe from employing embaſſadors, and the diſadvantages, with which unauthorized agents contend, has ſuch weight, that it is determined to ſend ARTAPHERNES with an extraordinary commiſſion to Sparta, as ſoon as the event of the treaty begun at Athens ſhall be known. I believe PYTHON is pretty well recovered from the conſternation he was at firſt under, when he heard our negotiation with the embaſſadors was almoſt concluded. He came in great haſte from ORSAMES's Villa at Taoces, to interrupt it, as far as lay in his power. The king told ORSAMES pleaſantly, upon ſeeing him the other day in the preſence-chamber, "that he could not help being alarmed at the frequent private converſations, which he held with the Athenian agent; and believed he muſt examine him upon the ſubject matter of them." ORSAMES replied, "he was content to undergo the enquiry, and would confeſs, that in ſome of his letters to CLEANDER was contained a full account of all his practices with PYTHON." I had a long conference with that miniſter upon the aſſembly's anſwer, mentioned in your laſt diſpatch, and brought him to acknowledge, that immediate ſatisfaction ought to be made for ſome

of the ſhips on our liſt: the ſtate of the caſe, with reſpect to the others, he is to ſettle with commiſſaries of the marine, who are ordered to confer with him. He likewiſe informed me, that the people of Athens, to ſhew how little part they had taken in ZOPYRUS's expedition, entirely approved the king's proceedings in regard to ſuch of their countrymen, as had been made priſoners in their retreat by the Caunians, which I told him the king could not look upon as an adequate ſatisfaction to the injury they had done him, by ſuffering ZOPYRUS to ſail out of their ports, when his deſign was publickly talked of at Athens; and that he inſiſted, they ſhould puniſh all, who returned thither, after openly appearing in arms at Caunus. I find PYTHON inclined to a proſecution of the war againſt Sparta, particularly if our aſſiſtance can be obtained; and ſtrongly of opinion, that the majority of the aſſembly will reject a treaty. But as I ſuſpect him to be a creature of CLEON's, I am doubtful what credit to give to his aſſertions. The perſons ſeized at Miletus, it is true, were the king's agents, which gives a preſent interruption to our deſigns in thoſe parts, though the chief reaſon for ſuſpending them is to wait the event of the treaty at Athens; for it is by no means our intention to draw upon ourſelves the arms of all Greece, before we are thoroughly prepared. Farewel.

P.

LETTER

LETTER CLIII.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS.

ONE would think, that the inquiſitive and aſpiring people, among whom I reſide, ſatisfied with the progreſs they had made in all parts of ſcience, were for puſhing their intellectual diſcoveries into a new and untried region, and had ſome ambition of adding to their boaſted acquiſitions in knowledge, the knowledge of futurity. Infinite almoſt is the collection of obſervations, which they have made for this purpoſe; yet an order of men is ſet apart for collecting more, or interpreting what they already have; and they imagine themſelves in a likely way of reducing to all the certainty and regularity of ſyſtem ſome of the ſeemingly moſt caſual things in nature.

I was drawn into this reflection by juſt now paſſing by a place, where one of theſe augurs, who are ſupported here at the public charge, was engaged in the buſineſs of his profeſſion. He was ſeated in a chair of a particular make, and appropriated to that uſe; clothed in a long white robe; had a crown of gold upon his head, and was adorned with all the other habiliments of his office. He had a tablet in his hand, on which he writ down every circumſtance relating to the birds of divination, their flight, ſpecies, voice, and manner of appearance; every thing, that might aſſiſt the enquiry he was making, which was to collect from ſuch notices, as theſe meſſengers were ſuppoſed to bring, whether

whether a projected deſcent of the Athenians upon the iſland Sphacteria would meet with ſucceſs.

I did not care for asking many queſtions on ſo nice a point, leſt I ſhould draw any ſuſpicion on myſelf and character; and therefore could not perfectly inform myſelf about the whole proceſs and iſſue of this affair: but I ſhould judge from the general joy and pleaſure, which were diffuſed over the countenances of the aſſembly, that they had not the leaſt doubt, that the event would be fortunate, and the Gods favorable to their deſign.

This incident naturally turned my thoughts on the ſubject of divination, and the various kinds of it, that are here in uſe. Some indeed attempted with more ſolemnity and expence, and therefore held in a higher degree of credit and eſteem; but others cheap and obvious enough to every one: ſo that all have here ſufficient means of ſatisfying themſelves with regard to any event, which they have either a curioſity or a concern to know.

I would not preſume to trouble thee, awful SMERDIS, with a detail of all the particulars, relating to this myſtery. The whole would be too tedious, and many parts too trivial for thy notice. All nature indeed is ſuppoſed to have ſomething of a prophetic gift. Every thing, we ſee or hear, is thought capable of affording ſome inſight into our future fortune, and obſerved accordingly with a ſuitable attention. Every animal, be it bird, beaſt, or inſect, under all the variety of circumſtances, with which it's appearance may be attended, every uncommon phænomenon in the heavens, every ſudden emotion of the mind or body, our very dreams, and

and even words, are imagined to contain ſome preſage of approaching good, or warning againſt impending ill. Theſe notices indeed are ſometimes too fine for the coarſer ſight of common apprehenſion, but cannot eſcape the penetration of the more acute obſervers, who are trained up to the art, and inveſted with a public authority to interpret them.

There is one kind of divination, which is ſuppoſed to proceed from ſome immediate communication of the Gods; another, which is the reſult of obſervation, and attainable by experience. Some pretend to be actuated, in an extraordinary manner, by a dæmon, or ſpiritual agent, who tranſacts every thing without their privity, and makes uſe only of their organs in the anſwers he gives, and the diſcoveries he makes. Another ſort have their bodies thrown into a lethargic and inſenſible ſtate, while their ſoul, at theſe ſeaſons, diſengaged from it's heavy aſſociate, is at liberty to traverſe unconfined the regions of earth and heaven, and inſtructed by the free converſation of Gods and heroes, brings back ſuch various intelligence, as enables them to ſatisfy all enquiries. We have accounts of thoſe, who have continued a whole age in this dormant poſture; but I think poor HERMODORUS was in the moſt pitiable circumſtances, whoſe body being betrayed into the hands of his enemies, while his ſoul was engaged in one of theſe improving excurſions, they took an unmanly advantage of his abſence, and deſtroyed the cottage, while the tenant was abroad.

Of all the methods of prediction, that depend on human skill, augury is here in the moſt repute. Nothing

thing may ſeem more uncertain than the flight of birds, or more unintelligible than their voice, or unintereſting than their appearance. But every thing relating to them has here ſome meaning; ſometimes more clear and explicit, ſometimes more ſecret and myſtical, but ſuch as may eaſily be unfolded by the profeſſors of the divining art, in all the more nice and complicated caſes. Theſe creatures, like others, ſeem commonly intent on the means of ſupporting their own being, or providing for the ſupport of their offspring. But it is concluded here, that they have higher views; and though they may appear to the leſs diſcerning buſied in ſuch inferior matters, yet they come to inform the Athenians, when their armies ſhould march, or their fleets ſail, with whom war is to be carried on, or peace concluded, when their magiſtrates ſhould be elected, or aſſemblies meet for the diſpatch of buſineſs; for nothing of a public nature, and of any conſequence to the ſtate, is determined here without their concurrence. Whether theſe notices by birds be owing to ſome divine direction, or may not, in ſome meaſure, proceed from their own ſagacity, I have not been able fully to inform myſelf; for ſo fundamental a part of their religion is a ſubject of too much nicety and importance, to be entered freely into, or to admit of any debate. To ſuppoſe them ſent by an expreſs appointment, ſeems a more reaſonable foundation for the ſtrong confidence they place in ſuch admonitions; though ſome proverbial ſayings in uſe among them, of their being privy to the moſt ſecret tranſactions, would make one think, they believed them in their own nature to be moſt prying and obſervant creatures.

But

But though this method of divining be more frequently practiſed and attended with more formality, yet there are a thouſand others in great credit. Lightening and meteors are cœleſtial ſigns, to which great attention is paid. A tingling of the eye, and a palpitation of the heart, are included in the claſs of divine prognoſtics. It was a ſneeze from one of his right-hand attendants at the time of ſacrifice, that is ſaid to have given THEMISTOCLES the firſt earneſt of his ſucceſs againſt Perſia. And our calamitous defeat at Salamis was partly owing to the warmth of ſpirit and confidence of victory, with which his ſoldiers were animated by this ſeemingly inſignificant incident; though we ought not to deny the owl, that perched upon the maſt of his ſhip, the ſhare he had of kindling up this martial ardor. For however unpromiſing or inauſpicious his aſpect may be in other places, he is treated at Athens with great veneration, and truſted as one of the ſureſt omens of ſucceſs.

Sacrificing likewiſe is not only uſed here to engage or acknowledge the favor of the Gods, but to collect whether they deſign to be favorable. From being practiſed at firſt merely on public and ſignal occaſions, it is become a ſettled method of gathering their intention, or ſolliciting their aſſiſtance in the common exigencies of life; before a journey, or after a dream; in any diſcompoſure of mind, or indiſpoſition of body. In looking for auſpicious ſigns, the ſoundneſs of the heart, the liver, and the lungs, is the chief object of attention; though the ſparkling of the incenſe, and contortions of the ſmoak, are of ſome uſe in the enquiry; and the poſture

poſture of the tail is not a little obſerved; for being twiſted, it denotes a complicated caſe; if turned down, it betokens nothing but diſaſter and defeat; but lifted up, it is confided in as an undoubted ſignal of ſucceſs.

If the victim goes freely to the place of ſacrifice, it is eſteemed a good omen. To try the temper he is in, they generally draw a knife along his body: if he not only bears this quietly, but conſents by a nod, (which gracious mark of his approbation is commonly obtained by pouring a little water into his ear;) it is immediately concluded, that the offering is acceptable, and the event of the buſineſs will be ſucceſsful. So much ſtreſs is laid on this circumſtance, that the Athenians, in times of diſtreſs, have erected extemporary altars, where the victims of their own accord ſtopt in the proceſſion; and here is a traditional ſtory of a mad bull, that broke looſe from ten men, and then tamely followed an old prieſteſs to the place of ſacrifice.

Theſe rites are performed with great ſolemnity before a battle, the victims being adorned with crowns, flowers, and ribbons, and their horns often tipt with gold. But unleſs the omens be favorable, the Greeks will rather throw down their bucklers, and ſubmit to the enemy, than by reſiſting be guilty of impiety and diſobedience to the will of the Gods. MARDONIUS at ſuch a juncture had like to have cut in pieces the whole body of forces under PAUSANIAS, had they not been animated by a ſudden change of appearances, and made ſo violent a charge as the Perſian army could not ſtand.

In dwelling on this ſubject I can hardly keep up a gravity, which it may ſeem to require; becauſe I am perſuaded,

perſuaded, that the whole myſtery of ſoothſaying, as it is here practiſed, is rather to be attributed to the contrivance of men, than the communication of the Gods; though it is with the utmoſt deference of judgment, that I offer my opinion to thee, venerable SMERDIS, who art ſo much better acquainted with the will and ways of providence. But from ſome inſtances, that have fallen under my notice, I can't help thinking, that it is a ſtratagem, by which ſelfiſh and artful men practiſe more ſafely on the credulity of the weak and well meaning. And I have often ſmiled at, though I could never credit a common report of our great philoſopher's ſuggeſting to the people, that a ſneeze was an admonitory hint from his attendant dæmon. Doubtleſs thoſe, who are concerned in the direction of civil or military affairs, have made, and do make great uſe of theſe ſtrong perſuaſions, which omens generally produce, as they may accommodate them by a little dextrous management to ſerve any purpoſes, they have in view. By this means they may baffle the beſt laid and moſt forward project, and throw a damp on the moſt active and enterprizing ſpirits. By this they may raiſe a multitude to the moſt ſanguine expectations from the utmoſt depreſſion of deſpair, and inſpire them inſtantly with all the fire and fierceneſs of enthuſiaſm.

The ſelf-intereſt of mankind, and their importance to themſelves, would indeed have their ſhare, both in producing and continuing this turn for divination; as it is a ſcheme, they might think, that would be often ſerviceable to their welfare, and which would always be flattering to their vanity. We are creatures made capable

capable of and deſigned for happineſs; we have therefore great quickneſs in diſcerning, and ſenſibility in feeling the ſeveral ways, by which it is or may be affected. This joined to our preſumed ſignificancy, and the chief rank we hold in the viſible creation, makes us imagine, that we are really as dear, and appear as conſiderable to every other being, as we do to ourſelves; and that all the different ranks of inferior animals were made ſolely to adminiſter to our pleaſure, without any view of advancing their own. On this account we are apt to conclude, that all the buſineſs, which is tranſacting near us, has a particular regard to our mighty-ſelves, till we come at length to intereſt heaven and earth ſo far in our preſervation, as to ſuppoſe, that whatever is done, is principally deſigned to advertiſe us of any good or ill, that is likely to befal us.

Theſe reflections have often led me to commiſerate the hard lot of this ſuperſtitious people, who are thus taught to overlook the enjoyment of preſent good, for the ſake of thoſe little fanciful elevations, which they have from the expectance of ſome future one; and when the real ills of life are ſo many, are expoſed to a thouſand adventitious diſtreſſes, that ſpring only from groundleſs apprehenſions. The hoarſe note of a raven is enough to chill the warmeſt hopes of an Athenian, and make a public aſſembly, intent on the execution of the moſt neceſſary affairs, break up in confuſion. Journies of buſineſs, which my friend PHILEMON and I had ſettled, have been often ſuſpended on account of the unpropitious ſight of a ſwallow; and many a party of pleaſure been interrupted by the ill-timed appearance

of a hare or a weeſel. I have ſometimes ventured to argue with, or banter the good old man, on theſe occaſions; but only found, that prejudices of this kind are impreſſed too deeply on the minds even of ſenſible and ingenious men, to be ever eraſed by reaſon or raillery. How much more agreeable to our nature and circumſtances is the practice, that is enjoined us in the pure and uncorrupted pages of the Zenda! "that we ſhould take occaſion every day, from the firſt animal we meet, to pay our grateful acknowledgments to the ſupreme ſource of light and happineſs; who has produced ſuch an amazing variety of creatures, provided ſufficient means to make them happy, and yet made them all in ſome degree ſubſervient to the uſe, and conducive to the welfare of man."

G.

LETTER CLIV.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

ON the firſt of this moon Scirrophorion, PHILOCLES, the Trierarch, arrived here expreſs from the generals at Pylus, with the news, that the Athenian forces had made a deſcent on the iſland Sphacteria, and after a briſk engagement obliged the Lacedæmonian garriſon to ſurrender themſelves priſoners at diſcretion.

I have encloſed the moſt authentic detail of the whole affair, in a copy of the diſpatch ſent by CLEON and DEMOSTHENES, which has been read more than once in the aſſembly with repeated acclamations. From ſe-

veral ſtrokes in it, I am ſatisfied, it could be drawn up by no one, but the enterpriſing ſon of CLEÆNETUS, who, whatever ſhare of merit he may juſtly lay claim to in planning out the action, ſeems determined not to loſe one title of applauſe for want of rhetoric in deſcribing it. The rejoicings on this occaſion are now at their height, accompanied by all thoſe marks of rioting, which the multitude are apt to commit, when fluſhed with an unexpected ſucceſs, which they aſcribe to a general, who ſtands high in their eſteem. The tranſport of the populace has exerted itſelf upon the houſes of thoſe citizens, who promoted the late negotiation; and their characters are made the ſubject of ſcholia or catches, adapted to the genius of the vulgar. Neither the humane ſuperſtition of PHILEMON, the formality of DIODOTUS, nor the caution of NICIAS has eſcaped the low raillery of theſe political ſatyriſts, whoſe rough licentious writings give one a ſtrong idea of the times, when the great men of Greece were abuſed from the carts of THESPIS and his contemporaries.

I can aſſure thee, noble ſcribe, that this event is looked upon as the moſt extraordinary one, that has happened during the courſe of the war; for in the firſt place the moſt intelligent perſons in Athens were ſo far from imagining, that CLEON's wild project would meet with ſucceſs, that they rather expected every day to hear of his ſhameful repulſe. In the ſecond place it was the univerſal opinion, that the Lacedæmonian detachment in Sphacteria, in imitation of the 300 at Thermopylæ, were determined to die in their ranks, after ſelling their lives ſo dear, as would make the victory

tory worth very little to the Athenians. But the iſſue of this affair has verified the old Græcian proverb, "The fortune of war is ever productive of novelties," ſince it is eſteemed the moſt diſgraceful blow the Lacedæmonians ever received, with the leaſt loſs to their enemies; and CLEON, whoſe military qualifications were never reckoned the ſhining part of his character, is now put on a level by his flatterers with the moſt celebrated captains of Greece for bravery and conduct. He is expected to arrive from Pylus in a few days. I ſhall take the firſt opportunity of communicating to him the rupture of the Lacedæmonian treaty, and endeavour to diſcover, whether the profeſſions he made me before his expedition, of drawing this ſtate into a cloſer alliance with ARTAXERXES, were ſincere. If I find they were, I will perſuade him to feel the pulſe of the aſſembly upon that ſubject. His emiſſaries ſhall ſpread about the diſpoſition, into which the haughtineſs of Sparta has thrown our monarch, to cultivate the friendſhip of Athens; and inſiſt on the reaſonableneſs of ſoftening the rigor of CIMON's peace, in order to obtain a powerful aſſiſtance from Perſia, which may in the preſent juncture decide the fate of the war. By this method the Lacedæmonian ſlowneſs may be quickened; and if the king perſeveres in his deſign to take part with them, ARTAPHERNES will meet with the better reception. On the other hand, it will be ſeen, whether the Athenians really intend to make propoſals of a ſtrict confederacy to our court, or only contrive amuſements, to prevent our joining with the Peloponneſian allies.

Thou mayeſt be ſatisfied, that the Lacedæmonians will not think themſelves much obliged to their embaſſadors at Perſepolis, for giving ſuch entire credit to the firſt advices of an accommodation, as to break off the conferences in ſo abrupt and ridiculous a manner.

Inſtructions, which, like theirs, were to be interpreted according to the exigencies of affairs, ſhould never be entruſted but to miniſters of the greateſt capacity and experience. And for my own part, I never thought negotiation the talent of the Spartans.

The republic of Athens is determined to puſh on the war vigorouſly, this ſummer. A fleet of eighty gallies is equipping with the utmoſt diligence, which is to be put under the command of NICIAS. The aſſembly have paſſed a vote, that a thouſand citizens, (who are to be choſen by lot out of the tribes) and three hundred of the Hippeis, ſhould hold themſelves in readineſs to embark at an hour's warning. They have likewiſe demanded aſſiſtance from ſeveral of their allies. The expedition is intended againſt Corinth, either to land and take the city by ſurprize, or to make an attempt upon the ſhipping in the harbour; both which undertakings, however plauſible they appear in the ſcheme, that has been laid before the people, ſome experienced officers have aſſured me to be extremely difficult, if not impracticable. Letters are arrived from SOPHOCLES and EURYMEDON, who were ſent with a fleet to Corcyra, the beginning of the ſummer. They give an account, that having landed ſome companies of Athenian ſoldiers, the revolters were beat out of their faſtneſſes; a fort, they had built on the mountain Ithome, ſtormed, and the greateſt

greateſt part of them obliged to ſurrender at diſcretion. The unfortunate men ſo taken were confined in a ſmall iſland near Corcyra, till the people at Athens had pronounced ſentence upon them, with an expreſs condition, that if any attempted to eſcape, they ſhould all be ſurrendered up to the Corcyrean magiſtrates. Theſe terms were violated on the part of the captives; and the Athenian generals, without waiting for orders from hence, after putting them into the hands of the magiſtracy, purſued their voyage for Sicily. Advice is ſince come, that the latter, glad of the opportunity to extirpate every remnant of the ariſtocratical faction in Corcyra, condemned them all to death, and delivered them over to the inſults and barbarity of the multitude. Such is the blind violence of party, wherever it prevails. May the extremes of it be avoided by every ſtate, that would preſerve it's good ſenſe, it's liberties, and it's humanity!

Before this reaches thy hands, thou wilt have received the diſpatches, of which CHARICLES is the bearer; and I will preſume to hope, thou art not unmindful of the requeſt I preſumed to make in them, that thou wouldſt intercede with the king for my return. Not to urge again the topic of the danger I run by a much longer continuance here, after practiſing with CLEON, I will juſt mention, that PYTHON has in his laſt letters to the ſenate informed them, that the Perſian court has very exact intelligence, not only of the actions, but the views and deſigns of this ſtate, and frequently earlier and more important advices, than himſelf. I am am ſenſible thou communicateſt my diſpatches to none but thoſe of the ſupreme council; but canſt thou ſo well

anſwer for the fidelity of thoſe, who give hourly attendance at thy palace? And as my letters are regiſtered in the archives, the holy mage, who has the care of them, may have no averſion to an Attic talent; and in that caſe an artful inſinuating miniſter, like PYTHON, will find eaſy acceſs within thoſe venerable walls. Think not theſe ſuſpicions founded entirely on my own chimerical reveries; for a friend of mine, who correſponds with PYTHON, ſhewed me a letter from him, in which he boaſts, that "he had contracted an intimate acquaintance with one, who has it in his power to inform him of the moſt material paſſages at the court; and that he finds no places ſo ſecure in Perſia, to which a gold key gives not the readieſt acceſs."

I will own freely to thee, illuſtrious ſcribe, that after having ſpent the earlier part of my life in acquiring a knowledge of the learning, manners, and language of diſtant nations, and almoſt ſeven years of it in the king's ſervice here, I long impatiently to reviſit my paternal farm in the vale of DIANA, near my native Epheſus. That ſhady retirement is of all others the beſt adapted to my inclinations, as it places one beneath the envy and reſentment of the great, and above their dependance. 'Tis there I would finiſh my courſe in tranquillity, and live only to my ſelf, praying for the welfare of the empire, the health of ARTAXERXES, and the happineſs of my generous patron.

From Athens, the 3d of Metagnitnion. P.

LET-

LETTER CLV.

CLEON and DEMOSTHENES to the Senate and People of Athens.

BY our laſt letters, Athenians, you were informed, that the reinforcements under CLEON had joined your fleet before Sphacteria, and that it had been reſolved to attempt landing, unleſs the Lacedæmonian generals conſented, that their men in the iſland ſhould be kept priſoners of war at Athens, till an accommodation was concluded. This propoſal has been ſince made in form; and though viſibly intended to prevent the farther effuſion of Grecian blood, was rejected with diſdain; anſwer being returned, that no Spartan ever came alive into the hands of his enemy. A reply ſo inſolent and unſeaſonable had no other effect, than to inflame the zeal of the officers, and excite the courage and reſentment of the ſoldiers. Accordingly, after giving a day's reſt to the army, on the following night we ſet aſhore eight hundred heavy-armed ſoldiers in the iſland, who ſurpriſed an advanced poſt of the Lacedæmonians, and either killed or took priſoners all, who were upon guard. The diſpoſition for landing the reſt of the forces was performed with ſuch diſcipline and regularity, that before break of day they were all diſembarked, without the leaſt oppoſition from the enemy. An accidental fire having a few days before conſumed great part of the woods, with which the iſland was overrun, made us leſs apprehenſive of ambuſcades, and gave us alſo an

opportunity of diſcovering, that the number of the Lacedæmonians was greater than we imagined it to be; for which reaſon none but the Thalamitai * were left aboard the ſhips.

The troops began their march early in the morning in order of battle, the flanks, van, and rear being covered with ſmall parties of the light armed, who were directed to haraſs the enemy, wherever they appeared, to ſcour the woods, and retire to the main body, in caſe they were puſhed too vigorouſly. A large detachment of Spartans and Helots charged us at the opening of the defile, and put our avant-guard into ſome confuſion; but our main body marching up to ſuſtain them, and our peltaſtai and archers ſorely gauling the enemy from the higher grounds at the ſame time, they were obliged to retreat in tolerable good order towards the extremity of the iſland; where they took refuge in a fortification, which from the ſituation of the ground about it ſeemed in a manner impregnable. Here being joined to the reſt of their men, they made ſo gallant and obſtinate a defence, that our heavy-armed infantry were thrice repulſed. After ſeveral hours continual combat, your troops were almoſt ſpent with heat and fatigue; and we began to think, though unwillingly, of ſounding a retreat, when the commander of the Meſſenians propoſed to us to attack them in the rear with a choſen party of the light-armed. We accepted this offer, and having given him eight hundred targetiers and archers, he found means, by conducting them

* Rowers of the lower benches.

through

through craggy narrow paſſes, to appear in the rear of the Lacedæmonians, ready to fall upon them from that quarter, the ſituation of which alone they thought a ſufficient ſecurity. We no ſooner obſerved this, than we ordered a herald to proclaim aloud in the front of our lines, that if the enemy would lay down their arms, they ſhould be admitted to capitulate. The words were ſcarce pronounced, before we ſaw moſt of thoſe on the ramparts throw down their weapons, and hold up their hands in token of aſſent. A ſuſpenſion of hoſtilities immediately enſued, and it was deſired by STYPHON, their commanding officer, that leave ſhould be given him to ſend to the Lacedæmonians before Pylus for inſtructions. But we only allowed him to call an herald out of the camp, who, ſtanding on the oppoſite ſhore, (which is but a very ſmall diſtance from the iſland) was acquainted with the neceſſities of the gariſon, and in a few hours returned, and declared to them in the name of AGIS and his council of war, that they had permiſſion to conſult for their ſafety, provided they did nothing unworthy of the Spartan name. Upon this the beſieged delivered up their arms, and ſurrendered themſelves priſoners, ſtipulating only, that they ſhould be uſed with humanity. The number of the Lacedæmonian captives are above three hundred and nine; the whole number originally ſent over into Sphacteria was four hundred and twenty, all picked men.

After obtaining this glorious ſucceſs, we offered up, according to the pious cuſtom of our anceſtors, a ſacrifice out of the firſt fruits of the ſpoils to JUPITER and MINERVA the counſellors, the tutelar deities of this

ſtate.

ſtate. We likewiſe ſet up a trophy on a riſing ground, which affords a fair proſpect of the enemies camp. We intend to begin embarking our army with the priſoners, and the reſt of the booty to morrow; and ſhall then reinforce the garriſon of Pylus, and take the firſt favourable wind to ſail for Athens.

We think ourſelves bound in juſtice to aſſure you, that the whole army, as well officers as ſoldiers, in their reſpective capacities, behaved with as much skill, valour, and intrepidity, as were ever ſhown by any troops, on any occaſion whatſoever; and we recommend to your notice more particularly, for their gallant conduct, PHILOCLES the ſon of LACHES, the bearer of theſe diſpatches, LAMACHUS captain of the Peltaſtai, and THERAMENES Trierach of the Nereids. As to the victory itſelf, we know not, Athenians, whether it may become us, who were unworthy inſtruments of obtaining it, to anticipate the impartial judgment you will form of it by adding our own. But in juſtification of your two generals, one of whom undertook for the ſucceſs of this meaſure, in a manner that might appear too preſumptuous, and the other both adviſed the deſcent, and aſſiſted to the beſt of his abilities in making the neceſſary diſpoſitions for it, give us leave to ſay a few words; that conſidering the courage and obſtinacy of the garriſon, and the advantage in point of ſituation and knowledge of the iſland, with which they fought, we believe your forces never gained a completer advantage, with leſs loſs, and more honor to themſelves; in ſight of an enemy's camp, ſuperior in number, which looked on as the ſpectators of the combat. Certainly

the conſequences to be drawn from it muſt be very beneficial, if you perſiſt in refuſing to hearken to the counſels of thoſe, who would effect, by a diſgraceful peace, what the united ſtrength of your enemies is not able to compaſs.

From our Camp in the iſland of Sphacteria, the 25th of the moon Hekatombéon. P.

LETTER CLVI.

CLEANDER to CRATIPPUS.

THE people of Athens are ſo elated by the victory at Sphacteria, that they have ordered as many Hermæ to be made in honor of it, as were ſet up after the defeat of the Medes at Strymon. My curioſity led me the other day into the portico, where they are to be placed. "I ſuppoſe, ſaid I, to a friend, who was with me, the ſtate takes this opportunity to pay ſome acknowledgment to DEMOSTHENES, the inſtrument of it's ſucceſs againſt the Spartans, by inſcribing his name with a recital of the action on the baſes of thoſe ſtatues; an acknowledgement ſuited to one of his elegant mind, who is equally ſenſible and deſerving of applauſe." "By no means, anſwered he; it is never uſual on theſe occaſions to mark any name but that of the people." "Methinks, returned I, your practice is an odd one. Why, you pay more honor to the trifling feats of activity or ſtrength performed at your ſolemn entertainments, than to the wiſdom and virtue of thoſe officers, who decide the fate of your country! The Athenians muſt have a very high opinion of their fellow citizens,

citizens, to think they are ſo much the ſervants of the public, as to endanger their reputation, without even the hope of this fantaſtical reward. Or you muſt permit me to have a very mean opinion of the Athenians, if the paſſion of envy can infect a nation, to the prejudice of the few, who diſtinguiſh themſelves." "You are miſtaken, interrupted my friend, in imputing it to the envy and jealouſy of the Athenians, not to their wiſdom and magnanimity, that they are fond of public monuments, but ſparing in their private memorials. I have thought the firſt often preferable to the laſt, ſince they are addreſſed to a whole nation, and may be regarded as an incentive to virtue by the meaneſt as well as the moſt elevated mind. When it is ſaid (for inſtance) on ſome of them, that the people fought valiantly and ſucceſsfully for their liberties, can one of the fineſt education, of the greateſt quality or fortune, infer any thing leſs from it, than that it becomes him to be the foremoſt in ſuch conteſts? or can the moſt uncultivated fail of being reminded, that, though he acts in a little ſphere, his life is a debt to his country, which muſt be paid, whenever ſhe demands it? But when a ſtatue is erected, or an inſcription drawn up, to the honor of a private character, it makes an impreſſion upon few. — To attain ſuch exalted merit is above the reach, and to deſire it, is beyond the wiſhes of moſt men; ſo that while the name of a people excites a general ſpirit of enthuſiaſm, the memorial of one genius excites only the emulation of another. Like an eſoteric treatiſe of philoſophy, it may fall in the way of the vulgar; but they cannot underſtand it, or improve by it,

becauſe

becauſe calculated for men of ſpeculation; whereas the public monuments are like popular eſſays, more univerſally uſeful and intelligible.

To turn the argument in another light. Would it not be inconſiſtent with that equality of rank, which ſhould be carefully maintained in a free government, to beſtow diſtinctions of this nature too frequently, even on thoſe, who are eminent? Can any more effectual way be taken to inſpire a love of our country, or to ſuppreſs the gentle riſings of vanity, than to let it be known to every man of parts, that it is a matter of ſtrict duty, to be active in the common ſervice. That what he performs with credit in the field is owing partly to the tutelar deities of the ſtate, partly to the valour of his ſoldiers, and the experience of his officers; and after all, fortune take a conſiderable ſhare of praiſe from him. That on theſe accounts he has no claim to crowns of gold, ſtatues, or inſcriptions. Yet, were the contrary practice obſerved, which you zealouſly recommend, the opportunities, which ſuch pre-eminence would afford it's poſſeſſors, of comparing themſelves with their countrymen, would intoxicate ſome with a dangerous, and others with a ſilly pride; ſo that he, who arrived to theſe glories, and had good talents, would in reality erect himſelf into the monarch of the ſtate; while one of meaner endowments would in fancy be ſo ſuperior to the reſt of his plain fellow citizens, that the gift of them would be a certain prejudice to the man, and render him ſtrangely ridiculous. We may add further, that as the beſt underſtandings are not proof againſt the giddineſs, which attends honors; ſo great honeſty may be corrupted by a facility

lity of procuring them; and they will be ſought for in the quarrels of faction, not conteſted in the race of virtue."

I was not willing, CRATIPPUS, to hold a controverſy with my friend, and yielded to him. From a trifling particular concerning the Hermæ, which the ſtate is now erecting, our converſation rambled into general topics; and the longer we talked, the more we loſt ſight of what we firſt diſputed. At laſt I ſaid, "How diſproportioned is the number of poſſible methods for preſerving fame to thoſe of acquiring it! an argument that we ought not to concern ourſelves about it's duration after death. If it has ſerved our turn, while we lived, we ſhould not eagerly intrude it upon the ſtage to the diſturbance of the characters, that ſucceed us; ſince it ſeems a ſort of buſy impertinence to aim at engroſſing the attention of poſterity. Commemorative pillars and inſcriptions are undoubtedly the beſt records of antiquity, as they are more laſting, and leſs liable to alteration than tradition. In the firſt ages an unhewn ſtone was often placed on the ſpot, where ſome remarkable tranſaction had paſſed; but the knowledge of it's occaſion could only be had from the memory and reports of the inhabitants. This imperfect means of giving information to ſucceeding times was afterwards improved, by ſketching out a barbarous repreſentation of the ſtory on rough columns; the deſign of which, in a courſe of years, was only to be gathered from conjecture, till letters introduced an hiſtorical certainty. HERODOTUS has extracted much of his hiſtory from the marbles furniſhed him by the prieſts of Ægypt; and

it

it is to theſe we are indebted for our acquaintance with the celebrated conquerors, SESOSTRIS, HERCULES, and BACCHUS." "And truly, interpoſed my friend, I would willingly part with their acquaintance. I am ſorry we were ever poſſeſſed of their names, or their examples. The love of praiſe ſoon put us on contrivances for tranſmitting it to our deſcendants; and moſt of the ancient monuments perpetuate the glory of particular great men, but ſcarce any are of the national kind I have commended. So that I am apt to fancy, they were not ſo much erected by the veneration of contemporaries for exalted merit, as by the perſonal vanity of oppreſſors." "I believe, returned I, the national monuments, which are your favourites, were never thought of, till mankind had wiſdom and courage enough to form civil ſocieties upon principles of liberty. Before that time whatever credit the ſubjects acquired, was unjuſtly aſſumed by the prince. But are you not of opinion, however ſeldom theſe marks of honor ſhould be beſtowed by the public on individuals, yet if a ſtatue or inſcription were now and then put up by the reſpect of private families to their diſtinguiſhed relations, that ſuch memorials might be uſeful?" "Could we rely, anſwered he, on the impartiality of friends, and were the voice of dependants as diſintereſted as that of the public, I would agree with you. Otherwiſe, if theſe eulogies become cheaply proſtituted to the purpoſes of ſervility, and in the opinion of every man ſhall exceed the merit of the character they celebrate, they will be attended with the moſt hurtful conſequences. The generality, when they find the lives of the great

not

not at all correſpondent to the laboured commendations of them, will conclude the perfection ſet forth there to be unattainable and ideal: for the difference is the ſame, between the impreſſion made by deſcriptions of what ought to have been, and what has been, as it is between that of precept and example. Poetry in it's original was ſet apart to do honor to the gods and heroes; but that degeneracy, which infects all human things, has ſpared not the ſacred art; and perhaps inſcriptions may one day be admired for the delicacy and ſprightlineſs, not the truth and ſimplicity of the encomium." "Then, ſaid I, by Jupiter, I could curſe the invention of letters, which muſt ſubmit to convey ſo much flattery to ſucceeding times. After all, if no man ought to wiſh for poſthumous fame, except the imitation of his character might be of real ſervice to the world, then it is weakneſs to think of it on our own account. If the vicious ſhare it here in common with the virtuous, and ſometimes men of low underſtanding with men of parts, then he, who has qualified himſelf to deſerve it, ſhould not lament thoſe accidents of nature or fortune, that deprive him of it. In a word, if the opinion of philoſophers be juſt, that there is another ſtate of moral deſignation, we may expect, that MINOS, ÆACUS, and RHADAMANTH will reverſe all the falſe judgments, that have been paſſed in this; and while they condemn monarchs and miniſters to eternal oblivion, will call out, to the obſervation of innumerable beings, many wiſe and good men, who were either unknown or forgotten. C.

LET-

LETTER CLVII.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES.

I Remember to have given thee an account ſome time ſince of the character of EURIPIDES. It is with pleaſure I can acquaint thee now, that, by the means of SOCRATES, I am admitted into his eſteem and confidence. He entertained me the other day with a play he has written on the fate of ORESTES, after the murder of his mother; which is wrought up with all the intereſting circumſtances, which the imagination of the poet, or the paſſions of human nature, can afford. As ſoon as the diſtreſs is raiſed to the height, and the expectation of the ſpectator with it, APOLLO deſcends from heaven in the laſt ſcene; and when you look for confuſion, miſery, and bloodſhed, puts an end to it, to the ſatisfaction of all parties. "Nothing, ſaid I, can be finer or more affecting than this performance: and yet I own myſelf no friend to what you poets call "the Deity from the machine." 'Tis true, here is a difficulty worthy of his preſence; nevertheleſs I am better pleaſed to ſee things unravelled by the ordinary operation of ſecond cauſes, than by a ſudden interpoſition. The Gods, you know, may do any thing; and though I can truſt them in the hands of ſo judicious a writer as yourſelf, I am in pain, whenever they are introduced on the ſtage, leſt they ſhould do a great deal more than their buſineſs. The practice therefore ſhould be diſcouraged; and methinks I am unwilling, it ſhould have the ſanction

of your example. Could you have managed the ſtory before us, as you have done ſome others, the whole would have been of a piece, and the tragedy would have concluded with as much nature as it is conducted." "If you conſider the plot, anſwered EURIPIDES, you will find it impoſſible to have turned it otherwiſe. And to ſpeak my ſentiments with freedom, when the play is drawing to a cloſe, the attention of the audience on the rack, unable to divine the conſequences, it is an agreeable ſurprize to bring things at once to an happy iſſue, and ſend them away in good temper. Such pieces make a deeper impreſſion on the mind, than thoſe, in which you are prepared before-hand for the event. I entirely approve what you ſay concerning the cœleſtial machinery of the theatre. And we may obſerve they are the fondeſt of it, who ſhew in every line a remarkable poverty of invention, but value themſelves on a fruitful fancy, becauſe their Deities appear in all the wantonneſs of miracles. In truth, how can the frequent recourſe to this machinery be an inſtance of genius? It had it's birth from ſimple neceſſity, and ſhould be uſed only in the laſt extremity; yet (like ſeveral of the arts of life, which were equally mean in their original) has been applied to the purpoſes of elegance and ornament. Believe me, I ſhould be ſorry to deſerve the cenſure." "Miſtake me not, returned I;—To cenſure you as a lover of theſe extravagancies, who are the trueſt maſter and obſerver of nature in the drama, would be as ridiculous, as to upbraid SOCRATES with the follies of the Sophiſt. You may be convinced, then, that, if I have common ſenſe, I could not mean it;

and, upon recollection, I am perſuaded, there is no way of finiſhing your ORESTES, but that which you have choſen." "I was fully poſſeſſed of your meaning, replied he, yet am obliged to you for your polite manner of explaining it. At the ſame time I take it as a proof of friendſhip, that you communicate every remark, which occurs to you at firſt reading, even though it be crude and inaccurate. I aſſure you it pleaſes me to find, that my tragedy is exempted from the imputation you have juſtly thrown upon many others. If I do not deceive myſelf, it is of that kind, which alone renders the deſcent of a God excuſable, (ſince I think it can in no caſe be commendable,) and may be vindicated, as well from the affection of the ſpectators for the wonderful, as from the reaſons I have mentioned." "I wiſh, interrupted I, you would forbear appealing to the vicious taſte of the times in your defence, eſpecially when you are ſupported by better arguments." "You may laugh at it, ſaid he, but it is of conſiderable weight. A dramatic writer, and a popular orator, are nearly in the ſame circumſtances. They muſt each of them conſult the humor of their contemporaries; or elſe they will never have an hearing; and impartial poſterity muſt make allowances."

"The affection for the wonderful, continued I, prevails very ſtrongly in the preſent age. And thoſe, who are deſirous to enjoy reputation, while they live, always ſacrifice the matureſt reſult of their own judgment, in accommodation to the caprice of their countrymen. HERODOTUS has interwoven ſome of the traditional romances of antiquity into his narration from that powerful motive. The ſchools of ſophiſts

and philoſophers abound in allegories. The theatre, inſtead of exhibiting to us ſtories of an eſtabliſhed date, or undoubted authority, (ſuch as the baniſhment of PISISTRATUS's family from Athens) is altogether converſant with the heroes and demigods of fable."

"You would gladly, anſwered EURIPIDES, bring hiſtory upon the ſtage, as it might give a fair opportunity for inforcing the principles of liberty, and a love of our country. But in ſome inſtances the nature of tragedy, and in all the temper of the Athenians forbids it. The nature of tragedy cannot bear it, becauſe there are many incidents, which, though they entertain in the relation, are too unanimated and uninforming, or too diſagreeable and ſhocking in the particulars, to compoſe a play. As nothing can be more ſpirited than a battle in the action, and yet nothing colder in the deſcription; ſo, on the contrary, many things pleaſe in the hiſtorical deſcription, which would diſguſt in real life, or the mimic repreſentation. It is for this reaſon, that in modelling a piece for the theatre, we are frequently obliged to vary the plot of it from the truth, for the better diſpoſition and improvement of it; a licence, which, however it may be indulged in fictitious ſubjects, would, I am afraid, be denied in hiſtorical. The temper of the Athenians would not bear it, becauſe thoſe facts and characters, which ſeem beſt ſuited to the ſcenes of a tragic writer, are too recent in the memory, and too much engage the paſſions of private families, to be properly introduced upon the ſtage."

"Suppoſe then, ſaid I, you ſhould reſort to Sparta, or even Perſia, for the topics of tragedy. I preſume the Athenians

Athenians are not divided in their ſentiments on the eminent men of thoſe countries." "In that caſe, replied he, it would be ſurmiſed, that I paid a diſrepect to the heroes of our own republic. So that the way to be free from all difficulties, is to confine ourſelves to the fabulous anceſtors of the colonies, which firſt planted Greece. The only poet, who ever dared at a performance of the caſt, which you recommend, was ÆSCHYLUS, the bold inventor of the drama. But you muſt remember, that what he wrote, had nothing to do with individuals.* It contained no flattery to THEMISTOCLES or ARISTIDES. It entered into no encomium on their valor and conduct: it took no notice of their laying aſide all private reſentments, to unite in the cauſe of their country, (the moſt inſtructive leſſon of that important war,) but was a general compliment to the Grecians. Nay, to avoid the odium, which perſonal commendations would draw upon the writer, and to keep off that envy, which would have fallen on the objects of them, he laid the ſcene as far as he could from Athens, in the very palace of XERXES. Should I, for inſtance, accept the ſubject you propoſe, different parties in the ſtate would take alarm; the one protecting, the other reviling me; and while I may have all men applaud, it would be prepoſterous to aim at the praiſes of a few. You will grant PISISTRATUS muſt be drawn extremely amiable, or extremely odious; for in the mixt ſtate his character would be unaffecting and dull. Were I to ſet him in the former light, I ſhould be thought ſecretly affected to ſlavery, a teacher of dan-

* See the *Perſians*, a play of ÆSCHYLUS, written ſeven years after the defeat of XERXES's forces at Mycalè.

gerous principles; and though it were the beſt performance I had produced, the very turn of the thing would condemn it. Were I to place him in the latter point of view, it would flatter the prejudices of the people, but contradict my own ſentiments, and the ſentiments of men of ſenſe, and do an injuſtice to the man. For he was a lover of lenity, letters, and politeneſs; nor was Athens happier at any time, than under his government. Should I deſcend nearer to our own days, and, agreebly to the ſcheme you offer, found a tragedy on ſome remarkable action of THEMISTOCLES, CIMON, or PERICLES, think you not it would be to wage war with the ill nature of enemies, and the partiality of friends?" "You amaze me, returned I; it ſeems frequent enough with you poets, to uſe ſentiments and expreſſions alluding to the circumſtances and perſons of the preſent times without ſcruple. Then why are you ſo careful, not to give offence in the plot of a play, as that it muſt be far fetched from antiquity?" "I can tell you, ſaid EURIPIDES, thoſe alluſions you ſpeak of are as much as the people will either approve or forgive. But if we were to ſtrike once out of the province of fable, and bring the ſtories of the times upon the ſtage, the rulers of the aſſembly would grow jealous, and imagine we aimed at transferring the ſeat of buſineſs and advice from the forum to the theatre. Even the comic poets, the privileged ſatyriſts of the ſtate, are often not ſo groſs as to ſpeak plainly, but intimate their ſcurrility by uncouth and extravagant allegories." "Would not the Athenians, replied I, be pleaſed to ſee the great geniuſes the commonwealth has brought forth, exhibited in their public entertainments, as it

muſt

muſt reflect an honor on themſelves?" "I think it appears, ſaid he, from the obſervations already made, that they would, on ſuch occaſions, be greatly divided in their ſentiments. Beſides, the ſubjects we chuſe are not deficient in this particular; for they are generally taken from the lives of the founders of our cities, and in reciting the misfortunes or proſperity of their families, we may be conſidered as doing credit to their deſcendants. Such tragedies are free from the exceptions, to which thoſe you wiſh for are expoſed, and give equal ſcope to the invention and oeconomy of the poet." "I only wiſh, rejoined I, to ſee fable baniſhed from the theatre." "I agree with you, ſaid he; but there is no running counter to the taſte and opinion of the age. The tragic writings, however, are not to be reproached with wildneſs. They are like the fictions, which they treat of; a mixture of falſhood and truth, of abſurdity and credibility. For I muſt be ſo candid as to confeſs, though our audiences are fond of fables, yet they love to have the natural graces of converſation enter into the dialogues even of fabulous characters; to ſee the real paſſions, and probable incidents of human life, wrought upon the ground-work of the marvellous.

EURIPIDES's defence of the Greek theatre, noble SATRAP, was amuſing, but not attended with all the conviction, which I wanted. Let it be allowed, that, ſuch is the conſtitution of Athens, it would add to the diſorders of its citizens, if their beſt hiſtorical ſubjects, which are contained within the late flouriſhing period of their affairs, were introduced on the ſtage: but it

can never be admitted, that theſe afford not more room for the skill, and leſs exalt the ſpirit of the writer, than the unnatural relations of mythologiſts. No, HYDASPES, the inimitable CYRUS, whom hiſtory and Perſia boaſt, is far beyond the THESEUS and HERCULES of fable. Perſuaded as thou art of this truth, refine on the model of the Greeks, and build a theatre within the walls of Suſa. With a view to encourage the project, I have drawn up a rough sketch of the plot for a tragedy, in the manner of SOPHOCLES and EURIPIDES, founded on the ſtory of CROESUS, and the taking of Sardis. If thou approveſt it, thou mayeſt put it into the hands of THIAMIS the mage, who is a good poet, and well verſed in their writings. In the mean time ſuffer me to congratulate thee, on the honor, which will accrue to thyſelf, by raiſing the great characters of thy country from the tomb of time; and on the aſcendant thou wilt gain over thy maſter, by inſinuating thoſe leſſons of policy and virtue in the preſence of his court and people, which MEGABYZUS ſuggeſted with equal art and ſincerity in the cloſet, or the council-chamber.

CYRUS in Sardis.

ACT I.

The chorus is compoſed of Sardians. The ſcene lies in CROESUS's palace. Before day-break.

The queen appears on the ſtage, expreſſing her anxiety for her lord, who went out in the middle of the night on an alarm from the Perſian camp. She prays, that

that the good fortune, which accompanied CYRUS in the day of THYMBREA, when he totally defeated the Lydian army, may fail him before Sardis. A meſſenger enters; relates the taking of the city, CROESUS's danger, his eſcape, the violent effort, that cauſed his dumb ſon to ſpeak. The queen recollects the oracle, which declared, that the young prince ſhould never be cured of that natural defect, till the day of his father's misfortunes; is in deſpair: the chorus comforts her, and concludes with reciting the change of CROESUS's fortune, deſcribes his extenſive power and riches, the confidence repoſed in him by the kings confederated againſt CYRUS, and the ſteps, which led to his ruin.

ACT II.

CROESUS retired into his palace, comes in diſordered with the different paſſions of fear, indignation, and ſorrow; calls to mind ſeveral prodigies; doubts, whether he ſhall yield to the conqueror, or, like SARDANAPALUS, take a reſolution to deſtroy himſelf. His queen exhorts him to the former. After ſome diſcourſe, he forbids her to interpoſe her advice. She withdraws. CROESUS accuſes the deceitfulneſs of APOLLO, who ſeduced him, by ambiguous anſwers, to croſs the river Halys. The chorus counſels him to ſubmit. They diſpute of reſignation to the Gods. The king eagerly enquires after the embaſſadors, whom he had ſent * with iron fetters to the oracle, in token of the return made him for his religious donations. The chorus reproaches him

* Vid. HERODOT. L. 1.

with

with temerity; asks him what purpoſe this deputation could ſerve. He anſwers, to require an explicit interpretation of the prophecies tranſmitted to him, and to upbraid APOLLO with ingratitude. Goes out to try what may be done for the defence of his citadel and palace. The chorus entreats him not to flatter himſelf with fooliſh hopes, ſings of a vain curioſity into future events, and laments the plunder of Sardis, with the various injuries, to which the fate of war expoſes its inhabitants.

ACT III.

An officer from CYRUS, paſſing by the ſtation of the chorus, inquires after CROESUS, ſaying, that he is commanded with a choſen band of ſoldiers to ſeize his perſon. The chorus prepares reſiſtance, unwilling to inform him. He uſes threats, and tells them, that they are all in the hands of the victor. After a little alteration, they direct him to an apartment in the palace. He goes out, and ſoon returns with CROESUS bound. The king ſeems ſpeechleſs, and in the utmoſt amazement. The officer acquaints him, he muſt be offered as a * ſacrifice to the guardian Deities of Perſia. He recovers himſelf; at firſt exclaims againſt the cruelty of CYRUS, but converſing a little with the chorus, he is ſoftened; reflects on the happy circumſtance of not out-living his proſperity. The chorus parts from him affectionately. He follows the officer. The chorus inſinuates, agreeably to an old oracle, that CROESUS

* Vide HERODOT. L. 1.

ſuffers

ſuffers for the iniquity of GYGES his anceſtor; and cloſes with a few ſtrophes on the uſe of adverſity to ſubdue the paſſions, and improve the underſtanding.

ACT IV.

The queen in confuſion is impatient to know the particulars of CROESUS's being taken. The chorus extols his magnanimity of behaviour. She ſuggeſts a thouſand indignities, which may have been offered him, with many turns of paſſion. One comes in, and tells her at large, what has happened at the pyle, on which CROESUS was to have been burnt; mentions the invocation of SOLON, the ſudden ſhower, that extinguiſhed the flames; informs her, that CYRUS and CROESUS are moving to the palace. [This ſtory will admit a noble deſcription.] The queen rejoices at the interpoſition of the Gods in favour of the king; but unable to bear the ſight of the conqueror, and doubtful, whether he may not puniſh her husband in another manner, reſolves to keep out of the way. The chorus ſings a panegyric on the wiſdom of SOLON, and vindicates the juſtice of heaven, which always rewards piety, though late.

ACT V.

Cyrus appears followed by his chief officers, CROESUS, and the fourteen Lydian youths devoted with him. In entering he orders his attendants to dedicate a tenth of the ſpoils to the God; then he turns to CROESUS, who kneels. CYRUS blames him for having broken his alliance unjuſtly, and with hearkening to bad counſellors;

ſellors; but forgives and honors him on account of the miracle, which was ſeemingly wrought for his preſervation. CROESUS makes no anſwer. In the mean while the ambaſſador returns from Delphi, who interrogated by CYRUS of his errand, repeats the Pythian prieſteſs's interpretation of thoſe oracles concerning the mule, and the deſtruction of a mighty empire by croſſing the river Halys. CROESUS acknowledges the fault to be his, in relying on his own ſagacity to explain them; declares to CYRUS, that he is now arrived at that knowledge, which he thought himſelf before poſſeſſed of, and from whence the God told him he ſhould date the period of his happineſs, the knowledge of himſelf. CYRUS is warned from the example of CROESUS's fall to preſerve that temper of mind in proſperity, which is uſually learnt from the reverſe of it; promiſes him ſafety and protection; and receives him into confidence. The chorus concludes the whole with praiſing the exploits, the clemency, the character of CYRUS, as worthy the empire of the world; and wiſhes, that the luxury of Aſia may not enervate the manners of the Perſians.

C.

LETTER CLVIII.

SMERDIS to CLEANDER. From Balch.

THE ſpirit of philoſophy is free, and recommends the confronting one opinion with another, that the force of each may better be diſcerned, and truth emerge from the compariſon. This, CLEANDER, can be

be no offence to friendſhip, ſince it is only the exerciſe of reaſon. Every man does it in his own breaſt, when he leaſt thinks of it; he, as it were, divides himſelf, propounds and rejects, argues and confutes; and, though the point remain undetermined, the mind is pleaſed with the operation, and wants no perſuaſion to be reconciled to itſelf. The tranſition is eaſy to the diſputes of friends, which ſhould be raiſed and laid aſide with as little appearance of animoſity. If a difference of ſentiment ariſe betwixt thee and me, arguments may remove, or friendſhip muſt tolerate it. I aſſure thee, thy miſtakes have always been ſuch, as I not only could bear, but almoſt thought amiable, becauſe they flowed from ſome generous principle carried a little too far.

Such were thy thoughts concerning oracles and divination, which thou perſuadeſt thyſelf are mere human frauds, the better to vindicate the divine conduct, and preſcribe narrower bounds to the dominion of AHRIMAN. But it cannot be denied, that certain preſages have been fulfilled by very diſtant events, which lay beyond the reach of all human foreſight. In anſwer to this thou wilt tell me, that innumerable others have never been verified; and that all together they are but mere conjectures, which, like ſeed thrown up into the air at random, have the large field of time to fall into, and it is no wonder, if ſome few ſhould come to maturity. Are we then to ſuppoſe, that the Bœotians, who are held in contempt for their dulneſs, ſhould have been able to carry on ſo gainful a deluſion, and counterfeit inſpiration ſo ſucceſsfully? Is it to be imagined, that men, not thought to abound in common ſenſe, ſhould daily

daily pronounce ſuch things, as not only paſs upon private men, but princes and ſtates, as dictated by the God of wiſdom and eloquence? Yes; thou art convinced this muſt be the truth; for OROMASDES will not permit AHRIMAN and his accurſed miniſters, by ambiguous anſwers, to lead men into error. If thou ſayeſt ſo, becauſe of the ill conſequences of ſuch error, why does he then permit it at all; ſince thoſe are the ſame, whether it ariſe from the impoſition of men, or the craft of ARIMANIUS? But do not men, who love error, deſerve to meet with it; every wicked man is a lover of error; he wiſhes not to ſee truth, which reproaches him, but is attentive to any ſoothing falſhood, that gives a gloſs to his conduct. If then a rapacious monarch, or an ambitious ſtate, would make unreaſonable encroachments upon it's neighbours, and wants no more than the ſanction of an oracle to juſtify it's attempts; does it not deſerve the deluſion it ſeeks for, and to be led into ruin (which is commonly the event) by ſome ſpecious prodigy or preſage? This was the very caſe of that unfortunate prince of Lydia. When he was brought before his conqueror in chains, he apologized for his conduct, in that it had been altogether directed by the Delphic oracle. CYRUS did not upbraid his royal captive with credulity for ſuppoſing ſuch a divining power; but he blamed his confidence in any power, which could authorize ambition or avarice, and give countenance to illegal invaſions; things oppoſed by the ſtanding oracles of reaſon, which OROMASDES has ſet up in the human mind.

I can-

I cannot, like thee, doubt the reality of divination, though I do not think it of great extent. I know the book of fate is in the cuſtody of OROMASDES; and that time alone is permitted leiſurely to unfold it to us. Nevertheleſs we cannot be inſenſible of the natural ſagacity of evil ſpirits, who may collect many events, which depend on the regular operations of nature, as a phyſician can foretel a diſeaſe or death ſometimes, by certain ſymptoms, that are the forerunners of them. Thoſe dæmons therefore may be allowed to foreſee many viciſſitudes of fortune, in ſtates, as well as particular perſons; but when they pretend to reveal theſe things to mortals, they do wiſely in wrapping them up in words of ambiguous import, becauſe they can never be certain of what ſtill depends on the will of the Deity. And that this is their practice I make no doubt; for as the mind is no ſooner diſpoſed to ſwerve from truth, than it is ſeconded by the ſuggeſtions of AHRIMAN, we cannot ſuppoſe he would fail to ſupport ſo extenſive an inſtrument of error, as the public oracles of Greece. He inſpires a knowledge of ſome hidden truths the better to propagate numerous falſhoods, and eſtabliſh his kingdom among men. The end is worthy the ambition of AHRIMAN; the means bear all the marks of a ſuperior intelligence, which dares contend even with the higheſt. And would it not be as impious to ſay, that theſe ſtrong deluſions flowed altogether from the operations of the human mind, as that external evil took it's riſe from the undepraved laws of nature, and the original deſign of OROMASDES?

Thou

Thou knoweſt, when man was formed, the laſt of the divine works, the Creator ſpoke thus to AHRIMAN in diſdain: "Be thou no longer my competitor; I have formed one from the duſt of the earth to contend with thee." Immediately the evil-one called together his miniſterial ſpirits: "Obſerve, ſays he, this new ſyſtem formed from ſeparable parts, and therefore capable of diſſolution; mix and confound the elements of it; blend together ſuch materials, as have antipathy betwixt them; and ſearch out the ſeeds of corruption. If ye cannot ſtop the earth's fertility, pervert it to the ruin of it's inhabitants." Inſtantly they divide the task; they pollute the air with unwholeſom vapors; they compreſs winds within the caverns of the earth, and kindle ſubterraneous fires, which ſhould afterward break through their confinement to the terror and deſtruction of whole cities and provinces. They cheriſhed and gave encreaſe to the caterpillar and locuſt; the baſeſt inſects, and the moſt hurtful animals, which were intended only to gather the refuſe and waſt fertility of the ground, but now make the cultivation of it neceſſary, and even rob the husbandman of his labors. Theſe dæmons proceed ſo far, as to impregnate the vaſt body of waters with ſalts, that, inſtead of allaying the thirſt, they might increaſe it. But here the heavenly ſpirits interpoſed; they ſaved the ſprings and the rivers, and ſet themſelves upon all the counterworks of benevolence.

AHRIMAN was thus checked in his career; but he had a dangerous engine ſtill in reſerve. "ASHMUG, ſaid he, (who is the moſt malignant and inſinuating ſpirit of his train) do thou inſpire man with error." This was the

the moſt fatal attack, which only the wiſe and virtuous can ſuſtain; an evil, which the benign ſpirits of heaven cannot forcibly relieve us from, without an injury to our nature. Hence it rages uncontrouled, and men themſelves become the inſtruments to propagate it, and accomplices with AHRIMAN; but above all, thoſe are his miniſters, his public votaries, and avowed prieſts, who attend his ſhrines for the ſpirit of divination, receive his influence in dreams, and vend his deluſive oracles. Farewel.

H.

LETTER CLIX.

GOBRYAS to CLEANDER. From Perſepolis.

BY the arrival of CHARICLES (who hath made extraordinary haſte in his journey) with your diſpatches, we were freed entirely from that uncertainty and expectation, which have given us many uneaſy moments, ſince we firſt heard, that a negotiation was ſet on foot at Athens with ſuch probability of ſucceſs. As the affair has ended, we admire the critical juncture, in which you received your inſtructions, and much more your abilities and dexterity in the ſafe and effectual managment of ſo nice and intricate a buſineſs. The ſenſe our maſter has of the important ſervice you have thereby done the empire, is beſt ſet forth in a royal mandate, which was immediately ſent to PISUTHNES, directing him to aſſign the annual revenues of three large villages near Sardis for the perpetual maintenance of CLEANDER the Epheſian, and his

heirs, "in conſideration, as well of his extraordinary merits, as of ſome remarkable ſervices he has performed at the hazard of his ſafety, the memory of which (adds the order) will live for ever in the chronicles of Perſia." Even ſome, who hitherto have not ſhewn themſelves your friends, are not deficient in doing you juſtice on this occaſion. What then, my CLEANDER, doſt thou think is the behaviour of thoſe, who love and eſteem thee, who have protected thee from calumny, and anſwered for thy fidelity and reſolution to the face of thy enemies? Let me appeal to thine own heart, how thou can'ſt imagine mine was affected on this event? I am ſure no words, I can uſe, will expreſs half the ſatisfaction I feel on thy own and the public account.

Before I enter upon any new matter, give me leave to ſay a little with regard to the apprehenſions you ſeem to be under, after having meddled in ſo dangerous an intrigue, and your earneſt deſire to be recalled. As to the firſt of theſe points, thou mayeſt be extremely ſecure, that a ſecret of this nature is intruſted to very few ears. To deal plainly with thee, only two of the king's miniſters beſides myſelf are acquainted with it; and care is taken, that the correſpondence relating to this buſineſs ſhall not be regiſtered in the archives, till a proper ſeries of years be elapſed, when poſterity may benefit by the example, and the perſons of thoſe concerned be removed from the reach of danger. Nor can I think, that CLEON, however deſigning and treacherous he may naturally be, will loſe the advantages he has reaſon to expect from the king's friendſhip, in order to ſacrifice thee at any time to the reſentment of the

Athenians;

Athenians; particularly if thou art careful in managing his capricious humor, and ſoothing his vanity. As to the ſecond point, the king directed me to tell you, that your experience in the affairs of Greece is ſo neceſſary for his ſervice at this juncture, that he cannot think of your return home; but that he will, however, endeavour to render your employment as ſecure as poſſible, by ſending you a private commiſſion, ſealed with his own ſignet, to be his agent at Athens, which, he believes, that ſtate will, in caſe of any accident, pay ſome reſpect to. For my own part, I am perſuaded, thy zeal for thy maſter's ſucceſs, and thy ſubmiſſion to his pleaſure, will not permit thee to repine at a delay, which thy love for retirement may, perhaps, think likely to prove a long one. One thing I can aſſure thee, that ſince thou art ſo much bent upon a private life, I will endeavour to put an end to thy miniſterial capacity, the moment I am convinced it will be no detriment to the public.

The commiſſioners of the marine have, at laſt, ſettled a project of a commercial treaty with PYTHON, who has ſent it by an expreſs to Athens for the ratification of the aſſembly. I encloſe a copy of it for thy private uſe. Thou wilt obſerve, that the ſum ſtipulated for reparation of damages is not a large one; but it is a ſufficient acknowledgment on the part of the republic, that many of their captures were unwarrantable, and is as much as we could, in reaſon, inſiſt upon; for it will always be found impoſſible in complaints of this nature, when two ſtates negotiate on equal terms, to ſatisfy the pretenſions of particular perſons, which are

uſually eſtimated at an extravagant rate, without giving up points of a more national concern. I believe the clauſes, which relate to the confirming and ſettling the privileges, and regulating the behaviour of the Athenian traders in our ports, and the Phœnician and Ægyptian merchants in theirs, will meet with a pretty general approbation, as being alike beneficial and fair for all parties. But there is one article, which may prove of a more difficult digeſtion, as it interferes with the private gains of their ſea-captains, and muſt therefore be ſtrenuouſly maintained by us; and the king has declared to PYTHON, that the rejecting or altering it will overturn the whole affair.

The purport of the article, which I allude to, is, that the Athenian gallies ſhall not viſit our trading veſſels, within any greater diſtance than two leagues of an enemy's port; and then the commanding officer ſhall call for and examine the maſter's bill of lading and paſs from the præfect of the marine, to which he ſhall give entire credit; and in caſe he finds any prohibited commodities, as arms and ammunition, on board, they alone ſhall be confiſcated, and the ſhip ſuffered to proceed on it's voyage without farther arreſt or moleſtation.

This regulation goes to the root of ſo many evils and abuſes, and is ſo agreeable to natural juſtice, and the law of nations, that I am perſuaded, you need no arguments I can furniſh you with, to defend it againſt any objections, which CLEON can make to it. You muſt exert all your influence, and all the weight of the king's authority, to procure his intereſt and concurrence

rence towards obtaining the ratification of an article, which is looked upon here as the baſis and ground-work of the whole.

I will add nothing farther on this head, than that if overtures ſhould be thrown out of mixing any matters in this treaty, but ſuch as have been already brought into diſpute, you muſt put an abſolute negative upon them, and ſay, that a propoſal of that nature would be very ill reſented here.

I am not at all ſurprized, that the news of our treating with the Spartan embaſſadors gave an alarm at Athens. By this time it will be pretty well over; but I think CLEON very ill grounded in repreſenting it as a breach of faith in us to treat with their enemies, when he knows what difficulties would have attended a cloſer alliance with Athens, and how much the king has reaſon to reſent ſeveral proceedings of his countrymen. Upon the whole, I think with you, that his warmth was rather affected than real; and that he is too ſtrongly attached to his own intereſt, to part in haſte with the protection and ſupport, which it is in the king's power to afford him in any reverſe of fortune. Upon his return from his expedition, you may acquaint him, that the conferences with the Lacedæmonians are entirely cloſed; that it would have been want of common reſpect towards the Spartan republic, not to have given a fair hearing, at leaſt, to what their embaſſadors had to lay before us; but that their offers were ſo unreaſonable, that the king could not be perſuaded to unite his arms againſt a ſtate, for which (however ill adviſed towards him their conduct had lately been) he ſtill pre-

ſerves a great ſhare of eſteem and confidence. You may add, that it will now be his own fault, if he does not ſhew by his actions, that he is ſincere in his wiſhes, to effect a nearer conjunction with Perſia. And for his farther encouragement to labor in ſo good a work, you may aſſure him, that there is at preſent nothing in agitation to their prejudice with the Lacedæmonians, or any other of their enemies. In ſhort, the whole drift of your diſcourſe muſt be, to engage him to enter into a debate with you, on ſome particular propoſals for a treaty, which, if you can ſettle between yourſelves, may afterwards be moved in the ſenate, as a proper ground-work for a negotiation at Suſa the enſuing winter. But you muſt always inſiſt upon the repeal of the two articles in CIMON's peace (ſo often mentioned) as a condition, without which the king will hearken to nothing. With regard to the proportion of ſuccors on both ſides, you muſt follow, as near as may be, the project delivered in by the king's commiſſioners to the Spartan embaſſadors, a copy of which was contained in my laſt diſpatch. One caution it is neceſſary you ſhould be appriſed of, which is, that in your tranſactions with CLEON you are to preſs the bringing theſe propoſitions to ſome maturity, with more or leſs eagerneſs, according to the advices you ſhall receive from ARTAPHERNES of his ſucceſs at Sparta; for the king ſtill perſiſts in his intentions to declare in favour of that republic, as the leſs dangerous rival to Perſia, if terms, in any degree advantageous, can be obtained. That Satrap will, in a few days, ſet forward on his embaſſy; he intends to croſs the Helleſpont at Abydus, and from thence

thence purſue his journey through Thrace, Macedon, Theſſaly, and Bœotia, into Peloponneſus. I have encloſed the letter from the king to the Lacedæmonians, of which he is the bearer; and from thence you may judge the tendency of his inſtructions. Whenever he informs you, that he finds no diſpoſition in the Lacedæmonians to comply with his offers, the king gives you leave in that extremity, and not elſe, to inform CLEON of a deſign greatly prejudicial to the intereſts of Athens, which is now forming amongſt the chiefs of the allies; no leſs a one, than to deprive them of their colonies in Thrace. We are very well aſſured, that meaſures are now concerting under-hand to march a body of forces into that country next ſpring, under the command of BRASIDAS. A private agent from Sparta is actually at the court of Macedon, endeavouring to detach PERDICCAS from his alliance with the Athenians, to which that prince is not very averſe, as he perceives their gariſons in Thrace are at preſent in a weak condition. A party is likewiſe ready at Amphipolis to throw off the Athenian government, as ſoon as they ſee an army in the field ready to ſupport them in the attempt. The diſcovery of theſe important circumſtances, accompanied in the king's name with an offer of aſſiſtance, whenever the Athenians are attacked in thoſe quarters, muſt convince them (or nothing can) that it is in the king's power, as well by his intelligence, as his ſtrength, to prove a very valuable ally to them, if they will but contribute towards fixing him in their intereſts.

As the king is very ſenſible, that whatever outward turn things take between him and the republic of Athens, it will be highly important to have a ſecret friend in their councils; he refers it entirely to your prudence to offer CLEON from him an annual gratification, in ſuch a proportion, as ſhall make him entirely ours; and he will faithfully perform any terms you ſhall engage for.

I have now, CLEANDER, traced out the chief outlines of your conduct, both as it particularly relates to Athens, and as it is connected with ARTAPHERNES's negotiation at Sparta. Moſt of the finiſhing ſtrokes muſt be left to your joint judgments in the ſcene of action. The king thinks he may ſecurely truſt the moſt eſſential intereſts of his crown and empire in the hands of two miniſters, whoſe abilities, diligence, and fidelity he has ſo often experienced. Farewel.

P.

ARTAXERXES to the King, Senate, and People of the LACEDÆMONIANS.

IT has been our conſtant endeavour, during the whole courſe of our reign, not only to adhere ſteadily to the alliances, in which we engage ourſelves with foreign powers, but to ſtrengthen thoſe bands of amity by cloſer ties with thoſe, who at any time expreſs their good diſpoſitions towards our perſon and empire. Much more do we think ourſelves indiſpenſably obliged to protect our weak allies from the encroachments of aſpiring neighbours, and to make uſe of that power, wherewith OROMASDES hath bleſſed us, not wrongfully

fully to ſeize and lay waſte the dominions of other princes, but, as far as in us lies, to repreſs the injurious, and relieve the diſtreſſed. Upon theſe principles we have conſtantly afforded a hoſpitable reception to the different miniſters you have ſent to our court, and given a full and impartial hearing to the complaints, which they have in your name, and that of your allies, communicated to us of the uſurpations and arbitrary proceedings of the Athenians, the neceſſity you thought yourſelves under to declare war againſt them, and your deſire, that we ſhould aſſiſt you in reſtoring the balance of power in Greece, and ſecuring the independency of every ſtate. But we take this opportunity of remonſtrating to you, that we have found theſe accounts ſo varying and different from the relations given of the ſame facts by the Athenians, that it has been impoſſible for us to determine, on which ſide the truth and equity of the cauſe lay; and we truſt no conſideration whatever ſhall engage us to draw the ſword, but on juſt and reaſonable grounds. Your embaſſadors beſides have not agreed on the conceſſions they were at liberty to grant us, though the queſtion concerned indiſputable rights, derived to us from the foundation of our monarchy, which were by violence extorted from us, and which, by the bleſſing of OROMASDES, whilſt we poſſeſs one foot of this extended empire, we are determined to preſerve our claim to. For theſe and other motives we have, by the advice of our ſeven counſellors, diſpatched to you the ſatrap ARTAPHERNES, one of that number, to receive any propoſals and accounts you ſhall think fit to lay before us, to acquaint

you

you in return with our intentions, and to bring back to us your determinate and final reſolution. He has been employed in the weightieſt matters of ſtate by our royal father and ourſelves; and both by his birth, capacity, and ſervices is entitled to the moſt honourable reception you can beſtow. And we do aſſure you, that whatever marks of regard you ſhall expreſs on his account, ſhall be conſidered as the ſtrongeſt proofs you can give, of your reſpect towards us, and your affection to the general welfare of our empire.

The firſt of the moon Churdad. P.

LETTER CLX.

CRATIPPUS to CLEANDER.

THERE is no prejudice more frequent, CLEANDER, nor at the ſame time more unjuſt or ungenerous, than that we are apt to conceive againſt the characters of thoſe, who have been active in oppoſition to us, either on national or perſonal accounts. The moſt conſummate abilities and integrity, in ſuch circumſtances, are never ſecure from the moſt virulent reproach; and the partiality of mankind, as it often beſtows reputation for ridiculous or abſurd reaſons, ſo it denies it for ſelf-intereſted, or falſe ones. Thus precarious is the good opinion of the world; thus contemptible the paſſion for it!

I am led into theſe thoughts by what occurred to me the other day, as I was ſurveying the temple of MINERVA CHALCIÆCUS in this city. "Pray, ſaid I

to

to my companion, did not ARISTOMENES the Meſſenian dedicate a ſhield here to the Goddeſs, with an inſcription ſignifying it was taken from the Spartan ſpoils?" It ſurprized me a good deal to find him backward in anſwering a queſtion of mere heedleſs curioſity, which, I declare to thee, carried no other meaning in it, than the words imported. "I don't ſee any ſuch ornament, continued I with my former inadvertence, among the offerings." "No, cried my grave friend, it would have been a diſgrace to Sparta, and an injury to MINERVA, not to have deſtroyed the ſmalleſt memorial of that rebel's vanity." The epithet of rebel beſtowed on one, whoſe family had been royal, while Meſſene was a kingdom, and the imputation of vanity on him, who was an unaffected lover of his country, and the humbleſt of all great men in his general deportment, made ſuch an impreſſion on me, that I could have been very eloquent in his defence, if the place and ſeaſon would have permitted it, or the man had been capable of feeling it. At laſt I determined in my own mind, to appeal from the narrow and opinionated underſtanding of a Lacedæmonian, to the enlarged and penetrating judgment of CLEANDER. Perhaps you may think, that a ſpirit of extreme good nature, or ſurly contradiction, has drawn me into an unreaſonable panegyric; and if you have heard but little of the hiſtory of this extraordinary genius, or unfavourably of it, you may imagine, that while other people unite in admiring THESEUS, CYRUS, LEONIDAS, or THEMISTOCLES, I would earneſtly contend for an hero of my own chuſing, for a portrait of my own painting.

But

But I beſeech you to deſpiſe theſe prejudices, at leaſt to ſuſpend them for a moment.

The Meſſenians are a people of the beſt natural ſenſe and courage I have ever been acquainted with, and even in ſlavery give continual proofs of their capacity for enjoying liberty, as well as the juſtice of their claim to it. I have converſed with many of them, who are deſcended of a noble race, and are ſo haraſſed by the Spartans, as to be conſtrained to the drudgery of Helots. Under all theſe oppreſſions they ſtill retain a magnanimity, which may break out one day or other to the ruin of this ſtate. They reſpect the memory of ARISTOMENES as much as their maſters can deteſt it, and are careful to inform their youth in all the circumſtances of his life and actions, that, when a fair opportunity offers, they may be excited to an emulation of him. For this reaſon they celebrate his birthday with joy, lamenting at the ſame time the unhappy iſſue of his endeavours. About forty years after the entire reduction of Meſſenia, (when the inhabitants were annually conſtrained to bring half the produce of their lands to Sparta, and to attend, without any diſtinction of age or ſex, at the funeral of the Lacedæmonian kings and ſenators,) in the 34th Olympiad, ARISTOMENES ſhone out to the honour of his country, and of human kind. With every good quality, that could engage the attention of his fellows, and every improvement, that the ſtrength and quickneſs of his parts, though little cultivated, could acquire, he raiſed a ſpirit in the people of Meſſenia, and, as ſoon as it was ripe for a revolt, communicated his deſigns to the

the Arcadians. They were old allies of the Meſſenians, had ſent them aids in their former wars againſt the Spartans, and received the intimation with pleaſure. ARISTOMENES loſt no time; he put himſelf at the head of ſuch troops as he could bring together, and with equal intrepidity and skill ſtood his ground againſt the enemy. His little army entitled him their king, but he forbad them to give him any name, except that of general. And though it is affirmed, that he ſhewed amazing inſtances of his military genius in the firſt battle near Deræ, yet he was ſo induſtrious in diſtinguiſhing the merit of inferior officers, and imputing the victory to them, that he at once removed all envy from himſelf, and inſpired his ſoldiers with new vigor. Immediately after this he came to Sparta by night, and gave his ſhield to MINERVA, praying for the proſperity of an injured people. The Lacedæmonians in the mean time conſulted the oracle, doubtful of the event, on which both their honor and ſecurity depended. They were ordered to ſeek a general from Athens. The Athenians commiſſioned the blind poet and ſchoolmaſter, TYRTAEUS, to go to them, in contempt of this requeſt, as well as in conſummation of the oracle. They thought no body could aſſiſt them leſs, at a ſeaſon, when they never wanted a commander more. But the conjecture of that jealous republic was a miſtaken one. It is ſaid, the eulogies of TYRTAEUS rouſed the valor of the Spartans; and that they were not ſo much indebted to the experience and conduct of their officers, as to the fire and numbers of his poetry. For my own part, I have always looked upon this part of

the

the ſtory as fabulous; ſince the neceſſity of the times muſt operate more ſtrongly on the minds of that brave and illiterate people, than the raptures of the fineſt verſe; and becauſe in fact it appeared, that TYRTAEUS neither retarded the progreſs, nor prevented the victories of ARISTOMENES. It would be endleſs to recite the difficulties this great man ſtruggled through; the complete triumphs he gained; the ſeveral acts of perſonal valor he performed; the turn, that fortune took at laſt in favor of the Spartans; the diſperſion of many exiled Meſſenians into different parts of the world; the colonies they founded; and, after all, the tranquillity, with which he cloſed the evening of his days at Rhodes, in the palace of his ſon-in-law DEMAGETUS.

There are, however, two or three accidents of his life, which deſerve a particular enlargement. During the courſe of the war, he frequently made excurſions into Laconia, with ſmall bodies of men, and one day fell into an ambuſh, which might probably have put an end to his life, and been fatal to the liberties of his countrymen. He had no leſs than half the troops of LACEDÆMON to encounter, which he did with ſurprizing dexterity and preſence of mind; but in the middle of the engagement he was ſtunned to the ground by a ſtone aimed at him from a ſling, and fifty of his men were taken priſoners with him. The Spartans ſoon determined what to do with them; and accordingly they were all thrown into a deep cave, not as honorable enemies, but rebellious traitors. All his companions were killed in the fall: he alone eſcaped; the guardian Deity of Meſſene protected a life ſo important

to

to the intereſts of it. He lay there three days on the dead heaps of his friends, covered round in his garments, and expected a lingering death with his uſual magnanimity. On the third day he was waked out of a gentle ſleep by a noiſe he heard, that cauſed him to riſe and look about him. He ſaw a fox coming in through a ſmall paſſage to prey upon the carcaſſes. When it ſtood within his reach, he ſuddenly caught hold of its tail, and as it offered to bite him, put his cloak into its mouth. Then he ſuffered the creature to drag him through the narrow way, and after ſome time finding the light to come in, let it go, and got out of the dungeon, to the inconceiveable joy of the Meſſenians. Thou ſeeſt this ſtory is rather to the credit of his good fortune, than of his virtue; but the next is a memorable inſtance of the laſt.

Some virgins of Caryæ were employed in ceremonies of religious duty to DIANA. ARISTOMENES, with one of his foraging parties, took them, becauſe he thought the price of their ranſom would be conſiderable, as they were of rich and noble families. In their way to Andania, where his reſidence was, they lay one night in a petty village. His comrades, heated with wine and luſt, offered great rudeneſſes to them, and attempted to violate their chaſtity. The confuſion this occaſioned alarmed him, and he went immediately amongſt them; but perceiving, that neither his arguments nor authority had any weight, he drew his ſword, ſtabbed the moſt furious with his own hand, marked the reſt with infamy, and aſſerted the honor of the women; ſo great was the

ſeverity

ſeverity of his manners, and ſuch were his exalted notions of continence. Nor was the lenity of ARISTOMENES inferior to his juſtice. After the enemy had taken Ira, and were plundering it, (which was a fatal blow to the Meſſenians,) this unwearied general choſe five hundred men out of his army, and determined to attack Sparta itſelf in the night. He propoſed it to the Arcadians and their king. Three hundred offered themſelves on the ſpot, and the ſcheme was agreed to. But the execution of it was deferred till the next day, becauſe the auſpices were not favourable. By that time the king had betrayed it to ANAXIMANDER the Spartan; and while his anſwer was returning, ſome perſons, who ſuſpected the import of the packet, ſeized it in the very hands of the meſſenger, and laid it before an aſſembly of the people. The Arcadians on a ſhort deliberation reſolved to ſtone their prince, and after executing the ſentence with their own hands, treated the body in the moſt ignominious manner. As they were proceeding to this extremity, they intreated the Meſſenians to aſſiſt them. The looks of the whole croud were fixed on ARISTOMENES in eager expectation of his commands. He ſaid nothing, turned his eyes on the ground, and burſt into tears.

Doſt thou think, CLEANDER, if an hiſtorian had recorded the actions of this man, a poet ſung his praiſes, or the theatre of his glory proved nobler and more extended, that ſuch virtues had ever been confined to the knowledge and admiration of the Meſſenians, or the envy and detraction of the Spartans? Would not his name have been continually ranked in all nations among

the

the firſt heroes of antiquity, and his character placed in competition, unfortunate as he was, with the ſucceſsful deliverers of mankind?

C.

LETTER CLXI.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS.

THOU mayſt remember, venerable Mage, that in the account, which I gave * thee of a converſation I had with SOCRATES on the banks of the river Iliſſus, I expreſſed ſome regret, that I could not then engage him in a deeper diſcuſſion of one principle, which he aſſerted with an air of the fulleſt perſuaſion, that of the immortality of the ſoul. I need not tell thee, with what impatience I waited for an opportunity to learn his intire ſentiments upon a ſubject of ſuch importance. This ſatisfaction I obtained yeſterday, upon a very ſolemn occaſion; and his diſcourſe has filled my mind with ſo agreeable a proſpect of futurity, that it would be ungenerous to confine within my own breaſt the light he has diffuſed over a doctrine, which it is ſo highly the intereſt of every good man, as well as ſo worthy the attributes of the great OROMASDES, to be true.

† AXIOCHUS, a friend of mine, conſiderable for his

* See Vol. I. Letter LII.

† See the third dialogue of ÆSCHINES, the Socratic philoſopher, publiſhed by Monſieur LE CLERC, 1711, in 8vo. PHRYNICUS, cited by PHOTIUS in his Bibliotheca, Cod. CLVIII. tells us, that theſe dialogues, and others, which are loſt, were aſcribed by ſome to SOCRATES himſelf. However it

his rank in this city, but ſtill more ſo for his integrity and amiable qualities, being ſeized with a very dangerous diſtemper, I went to pay him a viſit; and, to my great ſurprize, found his mind as diſordered as his body, from the apprehenſions of inſtant death, which, under the confuſion of thought, occaſioned by the ſeverity of his diſeaſe, appeared to him nothing leſs than the abſolute extinction of his being. In this view, even the conſciouſneſs of a long courſe of years, ſpent in the practice of the moſt diffuſive benevolence, could give him no adequate conſolation; and the dread of ſinking into nothing, to which human nature has a natural and unconquerable reluctance, rendered this laſt ſcene of the good man's life very unſuitable to the ſerenity and beauty of all the former.

CLINIAS his ſon, moved with this diſtreſs, requeſted SOCRATES to viſit his father, and to ſhew the advantage of true philoſophy in a circumſtance, which, of all others, moſt requires the ſolid ſupports of reaſon. SOCRATES entered ſoon after I came to AXIOCHUS, and began to diſpel his fears of death, as of the final period of our exiſtence, with an uncommon force of argument, and energy of expreſſion. "The powers and perfections of the human ſoul, ſaid he, are an invincible demonſtration of its divine and immortal nature. For it could not have raiſed itſelf to ſuch an

is allowed, that ÆSCHINES was a faithful reporter of that philoſopher's doctrine; whereas PLATO, on the other hand, indulged his own fancy, and publiſhed many things under SOCRATES's name, which, it is certain, he never ſaid. Vide ARISTID. Oration. Platon. P. 367. Edit. Canteri.

exalted

exalted height in executing the greateſt affairs, ſo as to deſpiſe the ſtrength even of brute creatures, though far ſuperior to our own, to paſs over ſeas, build cities, found commonwealths, contemplate the heavens, view the revolutions of the ſtars, the courſes of the ſun and moon, their riſings and ſettings, their eclipſes and immediate reſtoration to their former ſtate, the equinoxes and ſolſtices, the ſignifications of the pleiades concerning winter and ſummer, the winds and deſcents of ſhowers, and the unſeaſonable ſtorms and whirlwinds; and to foretel for ever, by certain rules, what ſhall happen in the natural world: theſe things, I ſay, the ſoul could never do, unleſs it were really poſſeſſed of a divine ſpirit, by which it can extend its knowledge to ſo amazing a degree, and comprehend within its view the whole compaſs of nature. It is impoſſible therefore, that ſuch a being, allied to, and reſembling the Deity itſelf, ſhould ceaſe to exiſt, by any change made in the body, or even the total diſſolution of it. No, AXIOCHUS, you will not ſink into the abyſs of oblivion and non-exiſtence, but be raiſed to a ſtate of immortality; nor will any of your rational delights be taken from you, but you will enjoy them more perfectly. Your pleaſures will have no tincture of this mortal body, but always continue pure and unallayed. When you are diſengaged from this priſon, you will be tranſlated to a world, where there is neither labor, nor ſorrow, nor the infirmities and decays of age. You will enjoy there a ſtate of tranquillity and freedom from all evil; and be enabled to contemplate nature, and ſtudy philoſophy, not for the ſake of the multitude and the public, but out

of regard to truth alone, and the ſatisfaction reſulting from the purſuit of it."

AXIOCHUS, ſtruck with the charms of this diſcourſe, cried out; "You have drawn me over, SOCRATES, to your opinion. I am now diſengaged from my former weakneſs, and become a new man. I am now no longer fearful of death, but ambitious of it, and impatient for it." "I congratulate you, replied SOCRATES, upon your conviction of this noble principle; a principle of the higheſt advantage to us through all the circumſtances of life, but moſt eminently ſo in the ſituation you are in. And now, if you have the curioſity to hear a more particular deſcription of the other ſtate, I will give it you, as it was repreſented to me by GOBRYAS the mage. He told me, that at the time of XERXES's expedition into Europe, his grandfather, who was of the ſame name with himſelf, being ſent to Delos, in order to ſecure that iſland, learned there from certain books of braſs, brought by OPIS and ECAERGUS from the Hyperboreans, that the ſoul, after it is freed from the body, goes into an inviſible place beneath the earth, the realm of PLUTO. The Porch of Life, which leads to the palace of the monarch, is fortified with iron bolts and bars, beyond which lie the rivers Acheron and Cocytus; and beyond them the Plain of Truth, where ſit the judges MINOS and RHADAMANTHUS. Theſe examine every one, who comes, what manner of life he has led in this mortal ſtate; and it is impoſſible for him to return a falſe anſwer. Whoever therefore has followed the impulſes of his good genius in this life, is placed in the ſeats of the good and pious.

Here

Here the air is always tempered with the gentle beams of their own ſun; the ſeaſons produce all their ſtores with unbounded profuſion. Here the fountains flow with the moſt limpid ſtreams, the meadows ſmile with all the variety of beautiful flowers. Here are ſchools of philoſophers, theatres of poets, and the moſt elegant concerts of muſic and dancing. In ſhort, here are all the bliſsful ſcenes of immortal happineſs, and undiſturbed eaſe and tranquillity. But on the other hand, whoever has led a vicious life, is hurried away by the furies through Tartarus into Erebus and Chaos. There is the ſeat of the impious, the pitchers of DANAUS's daughters, which are never filled, the everlaſting thirſt of TANTALUS, TITYUS with his bowels ever conſuming, and SISYPHUS rolling up the ſtone with endleſs and unavailing labor. In a word, here the wicked are tortured with all the forms of puniſhment to all eternity. This is the account, which I heard from GOBRYAS: you, AXIOCHUS, may paſs what judgment you pleaſe upon it. For I only know this from the unerring principles of reaſon, that the ſoul is immortal; and that the good habits, which it has contracted in this world, will prove the ſource of the moſt refined happineſs to it in the future. Reſt therefore aſſured, my friend, that whether you are placed above or below, you muſt be happy, ſince you have lived virtuouſly." "How, SOCRATES, ſhall I expreſs my gratitude, rejoined AXIOCHUS? Thou haſt more than reſtored me to life; thou haſt raiſed me to immortality. I ſhall now wait with pleaſure that criſis, which you

have taught me to conſider as the birth of a new and nobler ſtate of exiſtence."

Venerable SMERDIS, I returned home full of adoration of the ſupreme wiſdom and goodneſs of OROMASDES; who has endowed human nature with powers and faculties, capable of perpetual improvement through an infinite duration, while every new object, in the boundleſs ſyſtem of the univerſe, will prove to it an inexhauſtible fund of the moſt exquiſite ſatisfaction. Since therefore the inſtincts, the deſires, and the expectations, interwoven in our very frame, and the dictates of the moſt cultivated reaſon, ſhew me, that I am neceſſarily to exiſt to eternity; and ſince I feel, that the happineſs of every intelligent being in every point of its exiſtence depends upon the rectitude of its diſpoſition; I am reſolved, from this moment, to govern myſelf in a manner ſuitable to the importance of theſe motives. By this means I ſhall enjoy all the preſent advantages of a right conduct; and ſoften the uneaſy circumſtances, to which my peculiar ſituation, as well as the general condition of mankind, expoſe me, with this aſſurance, that virtue ſtands upon an everlaſting baſis, ſecure in its own nature, as well as from the immediate protection of the all-powerful OROMASDES. Farewel.

B.

LETTER CLXII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

MY brother HIPPIAS has tranſmitted to me from Epheſus thy letter containing the king's inſtructions, in return to the diſpatches, which I ſent by CHARICLES

RICLES. No one, potent lord, can entertain a ſtronger ſenſe of gratitude than myſelf for that gracious acceptance, with which my royal maſter hath ever deigned to honor the ſervices of his faithful ſlave. Permit me to ſay, that if the execution of my orders can claim any merit, it is owing to the fortunate conjuncture of affairs, which inſpires, and the maſterly pen of GOBRYAS, which enforces them with ſuch ſtrength and clearneſs, not to the genius or addreſs of CLEANDER. Lay me, I beſeech thee, at the footſtool of ARTAXERXES, and repreſent, in more reſpectful terms than I am able to invent, what I feel for this laſt and moſt durable inſtance of his princely liberality, which is as much beyond my merit, as beyond my deſires. The aſſurances thou haſt been pleaſed to give me of the entire ſecrecy, with which this whole tranſaction relating to CLEON has been managed, ſets me free from many apprehenſions I had, perhaps too haſtily, given way to, of its being diſcovered by the penetrating eyes of the agents, whom this ſtate employs in all quarters. But I muſt own, the paſſionate capricious humor of CLEON ſtill keeps me in perpetual alarms, leſt, if the Perſian miniſtry ſhould not anſwer his expectations in their public conduct, or feed his avarice with ſufficient ſupplies, he may turn the edge of his reſentment againſt the perſon, who engaged him in meaſures, which he will then fancy inconvenient, and cut him off by a more ſummary way than a judicial proceeding. I can however aſſure thee, that it is not ſo much any danger to myſelf, which occaſions the uneaſineſs of my preſent ſituation, as the footing I am upon with regard

to my former friends, many of whom being in the faction oppoſite to CLEON; and having formerly protected me from his malicious attempts, behave towards me with great coolneſs and reſerve, ſince the diſcovery they pretend to have made, that I am become one of his moſt intimate confidents. They charge me with nothing leſs than ingratitude, fickleneſs, and throwing off my old principles; and impute to baſe and mercenary views the part, which my duty to the king obliges me to act.

PHILEMON has not for ſome time unboſomed himſelf to me with that amiable freedom, which he uſed; and upon my entering the other day into an expoſtulation with him upon this ſubject, he replied, that he was not apt to conceive ſuſpicions lightly againſt any, who had once fixed themſelves in his good opinion; but there were ſome things in my late behaviour, which appeared to him wholly unaccountable; and though he would not aſcribe them to the motives, which ſome ventured to aſſign, he muſt tell me plainly, whilſt theſe reaſons ſubſiſted, he could not converſe with me on the ſame terms as formerly. I endeavoured to juſtify myſelf in regard to my late familiarity with CLEON, which I knew PHILEMON alluded to, by ſaying, that he had firſt made overtures of friendſhip, and performed ſeveral good-natured offices, in the way of trade, towards my brother and his family at Epheſus. But the ſequel of our diſcourſe ſhewed, that expoſtulations do not ſucceed ſo well amongſt friends as lovers, and I left him with much concern. It has been told me, that ſeveral of the moſt zealous of his party were very

earneſt

earneſt with him to enter a declaration in the Archon's court, that he no longer looked upon himſelf as my patron; but the humane old man rejected that motion with warmth.

Imagine not, potent Lord, that I have ſaid thus much with the moſt diſtant view of declining to obey the king's orders about my farther reſidence in this city. I know my duty too well, to diſpute his commands one moment; and if he thinks ſo inſignificant an agent, as myſelf, in any degree conducive to his ſervice, I lay my head in the duſt before him, and ſubmit without reluctance. But amidſt theſe perplexities thy protection, generous miniſter, is my ſureſt ſupport. 'Tis on that alone I do and muſt depend, to releaſe me from an employment, wherein I labour under peculiar diſadvantages.

But it is fit this perſonal detail ſhould no longer interrupt the thread of public tranſactions, which I haſten to lay before thee.

The idle preſages of the adverſe party are now mentioned with great contempt, who from two eclipſes, which happened juſt before CLEON's embarkation, ventured to foretel, that the armies of the republic would never be ſucceſsful, whilſt ſo worthleſs and dangerous a citizen was inveſted with the chief command of them. That favourite ſuperſtition of turning the regular operations of nature into omens of approaching calamities, has gradually loſt ground for ſome years at Athens; and having been exploded in the ſchools of philoſophers, will ſoon become an object of ridicule with the multitude, however tenacious they are apt to be of the pre-

judices

judices of childhood. When this ill-boding ſpirit lately diſplayed itſelf, I told CLEON, that if he found it made the ſame impreſſion upon his forces, which it did formerly upon thoſe of PERICLES, he might once in his life be obliged to the example of his predeceſſor for a remedy to the evil. An eclipſe of the ſun unfortunately fell out, as that great general was preparing to ſail on an important expedition: the whole fleet was ſeized with a pious conſternation; every body cried out, that the Gods were diſpleaſed with the management of affairs, and fatal might be the conſequences of joining battle with their enemies, before they had appeaſed the offended Deities. PERICLES obſerving, that his own pilot ſhewed more concern than the reſt, ſent for him upon deck, and before he was aware blind-folded him with his garment, in the preſence of the crew; and then asked the fellow, whether he thought that ſhort deprivation of ſight the token of any miſchief to himſelf. The pilot bluntly anſwered, No. "Why then, replied PERICLES, do you imagine, that the interpoſition of one cœleſtial body before another foretells any misfortune to your country?" This familiar illuſtration was adapted to the capacity of the hearers, and, I well remember, produced a marvellous good effect.

When CLEON returned from Sphacteria, he entered the harbor to the ſound of flutes and other muſical inſtruments; his ſhips being adorned with trophies, the ſtatues of the Gods at the ſterns crowned with garlands, and the ſoldiers on board drawn up in order of battle. In dropping anchor at the mole of the Piræeus, he made a libation to NEPTUNE in the ſight of the whole city,

who

who came out to meet him. At his landing, the multitude ſaluted him with repeated ſhouts, whilſt accompanied by DEMOSTHENES, and the other principal officers, he paſſed along through two rows of ſoldiers to the Prytaneum. During the proceſſion, the faireſt hands in Athens were employed in pouring the moſt fragrant eſſence on his hair, and ſtrewing the way before him with flowers. The priſoners followed in chains two and two. The magiſtrates received him at the Prytaneum, where they offered up a hecatomb to MARS; and the whole ceremonial was concluded by a ſumptuous entertainment at the charge of the public, which laſted till late in the night.

The next morning CLEON harangued the aſſembly in very pompous terms on their ſucceſs, which he extolled beyond the victories of Marathon and Platea, "ſince in this, he ſaid, they had fought againſt the braveſt of the Greeks, and depended entirely on their own natural ſtrength; whereas in the former actions they contended with puſillanimous and undiſciplined troops, and ſhared the glory in common with the reſt of their allies." He then propoſed the fate of the Spartan captives to their determination. After ſome debates it was decreed, "that they ſhould remain priſoners, till the peace was concluded, and be maintained at the coſt of the ſtate; but in caſe the Peloponneſians made another irruption into Attica, they ſhould be put to death."

The anſwer of MENAS, one of theſe captives, is much talked of, who being asked inſultingly by an Athenian officer, whether their companions, who fell in the

the field of battle, were not the braveſt amongſt them? anſwered with a Laconic phlegm, "that an arrow would be a very valuable thing, if it could diſtinguiſh a gallant man from a coward;" intimating not only, that there was no difference between thoſe, who were killed, and thoſe, who ſurrendered; but that the Athenians had never ventured to attack them ſword in hand.

Thou, who art miniſter to a prince, who can, without depopulating his provinces, ſpend the lives of thouſands of his ſubjects, in ſupport of his own dignity, and the honor of his empire, muſt be ſurprized to hear, what effect the loſs of three hundred citizens has had at Sparta. Notwithſtanding the haughty manner, in which their laſt propoſals were received, a herald arrived here lately from thence with a letter to the Athenians, earneſtly deſiring a peace, and offering ſome more towns to obtain one; but a large majority in the aſſembly carried it for anſwering, that they would not hearken to an accommodation, unleſs they might keep Pylus; a condition, to which nothing but the extremeſt neceſſity can ever reduce the republic of Lacedæmon.

The credit and power of CLEON receives new luſtre from the ineffectual expedition of NICIAS to Corinth. That general landed in a bay within a few leagues of the city, near which he had an obſtinate encounter with a large body of Corinthian forces; and though he claims the honor of the day (the enemy being obliged to retire, and BATUS a general officer killed,) yet he thought it more adviſeable to reimbark his men the following night; and having made ſome incurſions near Epidaurus, and built a fort on the Iſthmus, is returned hither with

with his ſquadron. If thou deſireſt further particulars, they are contained in the encloſed paper, which comes from a good hand.

Our friend is ſo elated by his own good fortune, and his rival's diſappointment, that he thinks he may be indulged in any thing. The following inſtance is a ſtrong ſpecimen of his humor, as well as of this people's temper. The other day the aſſembly being convened on ſome buſineſs of conſequence, waited for his coming two or three hours before they begun. At laſt he enters the forum with a chaplet on his head, and told them, that he had ſet apart that morning to offer a domeſtic ſacrifice, and had invited ſome particular friends to an entertainment afterwards; and therefore hoped they would put off the buſineſs. The aſſembly, who are much delighted by theſe flights, burſt out into a loud laugh, and adjourned to another time.

The affair of the marine treaty is brought to a happy concluſion. When it firſt arrived, there was great art and induſtry employed by the Trierarchs and their friends to excite a general clamor againſt the article, which regulates the viſiting our merchant-ſhips; and CLEON himſelf ſeemed diſpoſed to inſiſt upon the taking off the reſtraint of two leagues. I diſcuſſed that point with him very thoroughly, and repreſented, and proved beyond contradiction, that the true ſource of all the objections to the treaty aroſe from the ſtop, which it would put to the rapine and extortion of their ſea-officers, whoſe private gains ought not to be brought into competition with the general intereſt and ſecurity of the trade of both nations. My reaſons were ſo ſucceſsful,

that

that he promiſed me to uſe his beſt endeavors, that all the articles without exception ſhould be confirmed; only he preſſed, that another might be added, for the better diſcovering and puniſhing the authors of counterfeit bills of lading and paſſes. I thought the motion quite reaſonable, and aſſiſted in framing an article to that purpoſe, which I hope will meet with my royal maſter's approbation.

CLEON has kept his word, and really taken very laudable pains to remove the prejudices, that were raiſed againſt ſome clauſes of the treaty; which, however, upon the whole, gives great ſatisfaction to the merchants here.*

The aſſembly have confirmed it by a decree, which is ſent to their agent at the Perſian court, who is inſtructed to receive the king's oath for the obſervance of the conditions, and require, that the Athenian merchants ſhould be immediately put in poſſeſſion of the privileges, which they are to enjoy by virtue of the treaty. I muſt do PYTHON the juſtice to ſay, that on this oc-

* It is much to be lamented, that this treaty of commerce, which would have given us farther light into the trade and navigation of thoſe potent ſtates, Athens and Perſia, is only alluded to in the correſpondence, and not preſerved entire. I do not find, that Mr. BARBEYRAC, in his accurate Collection of Ancient Treaties, has given us the leaſt hint of it; but if that learned profeſſor ſhould publiſh another edition of his valuable performance, I dare ſay he will enrich it with the particulars recited in the diſpatches of CLEANDER and GOBRYAS, from whence many curious inferences may be drawn. Note by the Tranſlator.

caſion

caſion he has acted the part of a miniſter, who thought it his duty to preſerve a good underſtanding, and keep matters even between both ſtates; and ſubmit it to your better judgment, potent Lord, whether for his future encouragement you ſhould not take notice of his candid and impartial dealing in an affair, which a malicious and ill deſigning inſtrument might have entangled with many difficulties.

I have conferred with CLEON upon the other points of my inſtructions, and find him very deſirous to be inſtrumental in ſtrengthening this ſtate by a cloſer alliance with Perſia. He told me, as ſoon as I ſtarted the point, that the people would never repeal the two articles of CIMON's treaty by expreſs words; but if we could agree on ſome expedient to anſwer the ſame end more indirectly, he would uſe his beſt endeavors to make it paſs, though he doubted even that would meet with a warm oppoſition. I anſwered, it would be difficult to ſtrike out a medium upon a point, wherein both parties thought their reputation and intereſt ſo nearly concerned; and that it behoved the Athenians to conſider, whether they would not gain ſo conſiderable an ally as the king at an eaſy rate, by giving up to him, with a good grace, what he had, at the preſent juncture, in his power to ſeize, without asking their conſent. Not to tire thee with a needleſs detail, after turning the ſubject over in our thoughts, we conceived, that an article to the following purpoſe might anſwer the king's intention, and not ſhock the delicacy of the aſſembly. "By the preſent treaty all ancient juriſdictions, rights, and privileges of both the contracting

parties ſhall be confirmed and ſecured." But I added, "that as my inſtructions directed me to inſiſt upon an expreſs annulling of thoſe diſhonorable clauſes in CIMON's peace, I did not think myſelf at liberty to accept this expedient, as an adequate ſatisfaction to the king, or to give any hopes of its being agreed to in Perſia: I could only tranſmit it to the miniſters, and expect their farther orders on the point."

There likewiſe paſſed ſome converſation between us on the ſuccours, which the republic would require the king to furniſh, beſides a fleet of an hundred galleys. He inſiſts, that an army be formed on the Helleſpont to cover their dominions in Thrace, though I could not diſcover, that he was under any immediate apprehenſion of their being attacked.

He told me at parting, that he intended to communicate the ſubſtance of this conference to ſome of his friends, who had greateſt weight amongſt the people; and when it had been more minutely and thoroughly conſidered, would give me another meeting. Thou mayeſt be aſſured, I ſhall preſs this matter no farther, till I hear the reſult of ARTAPHERNES's negotiation at Sparta. There will be always matter enough in reſerve to break off upon, whenever it ſhall be judged expedient. CLEON profeſſed to me ſeveral times with great warmth, that he ſhould think it the greateſt honor and happineſs of his life to deſerve the good opinion of ſo generous and great a prince as ARTAXERXES, and to cure that averſion, which his countrymen had contracted to the very name of a Perſian. At the ſame time he hoped, from the king's juſtice and humanity, that

if

if ever the malice of his enemies prevailed, which in a commonwealth ſo given to change was putting no improbable caſe, he might find a ſafe retreat in his dominions. I hope I did not exceed my inſtructions by aſſuring him, that whenever ſuch a reverſe of fortune (which would be a fatal ſtroke to both ſtates) did befal him, he might depend on a reception proportionate to his merit, and to the ſervices, which he had it in his power to perform.

Since thou art pleaſed to rely upon my opinion as to the annual gratifications, which he will expect from our court, I am confident the ſum of fifty Attic talents of gold, regularly paid, will fix him entirely in our intereſt; and it is much to be deſired, that his vanity may be ſo far indulged, as to receive now and then from the king a letter in approbation of his conduct, a jewel, or ſome ſuch perſonal mark of favor.

But let me alſo forewarn thee, potent lord, that though a love of money is a predominant paſſion with our friend, whoſe continual expences are much larger than his annual income, or the profits of the public employments, which are conferred upon him, can ſupport; a ſtrong and unbridled reſentment is a no leſs diſtinguiſhing part of his character. And I think him very capable, out of mere vexation at being duped, when he thinks himſelf moſt ſecure of our alliance, to take a turn equally violent and oppoſite; and to ſtrike up a ſudden peace with Sparta, that he may afterwards have his revenge upon Perſia. For as he finds it his intereſt to keep Athens engaged in a war, he will not much concern himſelf, whether the objects of

it be Greeks or Barbarians; and a rupture with the latter is a cauſe more univerſally approved.

I queſtion not the vigilance and induſtry of ARTAPHERNES and CRATIPPUS to keep the Spartans ſteady to their engagements, and prevent any excluſive accommodation with Athens from taking effect. But thou muſt be ſenſible, that though a great deal of pains is requiſite to preſerve things in an unnatural courſe, (as, to ſpeak truth, a league between one of the moſt powerful Grecian ſtates and our empire may juſtly be called,) the ſlighteſt event, the moſt unforeſeen revolution of affairs, is ſufficient to bring them back to their natural channel. Upon a careful peruſal of thy laſt diſpatch, I find no inſtructions, in what manner I ſhall behave towards CLEON, in caſe an alliance is concluded with Sparta; and yet it will be very neceſſary to inform me with the utmoſt ſpeed, in what terms I ſhall palliate or explain ſuch a matter to him, which he will infallibly look upon as a breach of thoſe aſſurances and hopes thou haſt warranted me to give him.

I doubt not, noble ſcribe, that beſides the proper methods of carrying on a war, in conjunction with either of the republics, which ſhall purchaſe our friendſhip by the moſt advantageous terms, thou muſt have conſidered of ſome ſcheme for a general pacification in this country, whenever affairs ſhall take that turn. And as it muſt, in all probability, be concluded under the king's arbitration, give me leave to recommend it to him, to inſiſt upon it as an eſſential condition, that all the Grecian ſtates ſhould be left to the enjoyment of

their

their own laws and liberties.* I know there is nothing, which the two principal commonwealths dread ſo much, as to be deprived of that authority they now exerciſe over the leſſer ſtates, which is indeed neceſſary for the union and common ſafety of the country. At the ſame time nothing will carry a more popular ſound with it, than to eſtabliſh an univerſal independency over Greece, nor have more the appearance of equity, than that every city from the greateſt to the leaſt ſhould enjoy an equal portion of liberty.

Thou art too ſagacious, experienced miniſter, not to perceive, that this is the ſureſt method of weakening the general ſtrength of Greece, and ſowing the ſeeds of perpetual diviſion amongſt it's inhabitants; for the weakeſt muſt, upon every occaſion, call in the aſſiſtance of Perſia, and appeal with eagerneſs to the mediation of its prince, who, without the leaſt expence of blood or treaſure, will have the ſatisfaction of dictating laws to thoſe, who refuſed to receive them from the moſt powerful of their predeceſſors, and reign in gran-

* The peace of Antalcidas concluded about thirty years after, under the arbitration of ARTAXERXES MNEMON, was formed upon the plan recommended in this letter by CLEANDER. Thoſe, who are acquainted with the Roman ſtory, muſt recollect, that Q. FLAMINIUS, after driving the Macedonians out of Greece, purſued the ſame policy, which by giving the ſenate a pretext to interpoſe in every difference, how immaterial ſoever, that aroſe among ſo many independent diſunited ſtates, ſoon brought them all under the Roman yoke. Theſe two examples, I muſt confeſs, heighten my opinion of our Epheſian's judgment and ſagacity. Note by the Tranſlator.

deur and tranquillity ſecure from the danger of any confederated invaſion of their territories. Farewel.

From Athens the 19th of the month Boedromion.

P.

LETTER CLXIII.

CRATIPPUS to CLEANDER. From Sparta.

THE reſolution taken by the ſupreme council to ſend one of their own number to this city does great honor to thoſe repreſentations, I have lately ventured to lay before them. I ſaw very clearly, that NICANDER, who in truth had alone the ſecret of the embaſſy, was not to be treated with. The ridiculous prejudice about Greeks and Barbarians entirely takes up his little mind; beſides that he is attached to a powerful faction here, who would redeem the priſoners of Sphacteria at the price of almoſt any peace. My friend BRASIDAS has put himſelf at the head of the oppoſite party: the military glory, which he acquired in the late campaigns, is much heightened by a character of juſtice and humanity, which all agree to give him, and which has induced ſeveral of the Athenian allies to open their gates to him, and become the friends of his ſtate. Thus qualified, he has projected a noble revenge for the affront at Pylos, and hopes his attempt upon the enemy's rich ſettlements in Thrace will more than compenſate the loſs of an handful of Spartan citizens. In this deſign the aſſiſtance of Perſia will be of ſingular uſe; and if ARTAPHERNES may undertake for a body of troops to be ready on the other ſide the Helleſpont, it will ſmooth the way to whatever demands

he

he is to make. But it is not only from this particular circumſtance of affairs, that I conceive great hopes of his embaſſy. A ſatrap of his rank has never been ſeen in Greece, except at the head of a vaſt army, laying waſte her provinces, and inſlaving the inhabitants: and it will flatter the vanity of this haughty republic, that the firſt of that quality, who paſſes into Europe with offers of peace, is addreſſed hither. By his nearneſs to the king's perſon he will ſpeak in his name with great authority; and the conceſſions he ſhall make in the courſe of the negotiation, will be attended to, as not to be diſowned or evaded. As I promiſe myſelf ſo much from ARTAPHERNES, I am the more impatient for his arrival, and not without ſome apprehenſion, that his journey through Thrace may be inconvenient, if not dangerous. At this ſeaſon the Athenian commiſſioners are travelling about that country to collect the tribute; and, I doubt, whether the law of nations will prevail upon them to let ſuch an army of ſtrangers, as attend upon the ſatrap, paſs through their territory toward the enemy. It would have been more adviſeable to take the rout, I mentioned in my firſt project, from ſome port of Caria directly croſs the Egean to the Bay of Laconia.

The firſt notice the public had of any expedition being intended, was a proclamation addreſſed to the Helots, inviting all ſuch, as had ſerved in the wars with reputation, to appear before the Ephori, in order to their receiving the reward of their bravery, and being again enliſted. Great numbers preſented themſelves; and the magiſtrates choſe out two thouſand of the moſt vigorous and alert, whom they immediately crowned with garlands, and led in proceſſion round the temples,

by theſe ceremonies declaring them freemen of Sparta. I was upon the plain at the foot of Taygetus the day they were drawn out, and ſtruck with the warlike appearance of theſe enfranchiſed ſlaves, I could not but congratulate the Polemarchs, who ſtood near me, that their city was able to raiſe thus on a ſudden ſuch a formidable body of men from a part of the people, which was condemned to the meaner offices of life, and looked on as nothing leſs than a ſeminary for ſoldiers. The officers received my compliment in a more cold and dry manner, than I, though ſo long uſed to their turn of converſation, could expect; but a little time convinced me, that I had touched upon a diſagreeable point. Theſe troops were not to be employed in foreign ſervice; nor was their admiſſion to the rank of citizens intended as an increaſe of ſtrength at home. They ſoon began to diſappear by degrees, and ſome days after not one of them was to be ſeen or heard of any more. All this paſſed without one remark made upon it; it was a ſubject ſtudiouſly avoided in every converſation. My curioſity was therefore but the more excited; and at laſt I got certain intelligence, that theſe deluded wretches had quarters aſſigned them in the houſes of the principal citizens, with the intention, that each man might have an opportunity of diſpatching his gueſts in the moſt private manner. Thus periſhed, without an enemy, in the midſt of their own city, a greater number of men, than has been known to fall in a battle amongſt the Greeks. What a ſacrifice to the prejudices and falſe maxims of Spartan policy! Abſurd and deteſtable policy! which looks upon

on the increaſe of inhabitants to be dangerous to the ſtate, and treats thoſe, who ſupply the firſt neceſſaries of life, the tillers of the ground, as public enemies. A plague or an inundation would be proper inſtruments of ſuch a government; and might have ſpared the ruling members the extenſive act of barbarity, which has now been thought expedient. The eſtabliſhed methods of dealing with the Helots are ſuch, as tend to make them foes to their maſters, and to introduce a neceſſity of keeping down their numbers, and their ſpirits. But this is uſually brought about by ſlow degrees; the preſent exigency of affairs was judged to call for ſomething more ſudden and deciſive. Pylos, a fortreſs ſo near this city, ſeized by the Athenians, has by them been delivered over to the Meſſenians, always either ſlaves to Sparta, or her deadlieſt enemies, who call the Helots countrymen, and loudly invite them to ſhake off their chains. Such an occaſion of liberty and revenge the Ephori ſuppoſed would not be neglected; they foreſaw continual deſertion; they feared a general revolt, and knew not how to prevent it, but by a maſſacre of the moſt active and daring.

I proteſt, CLEANDER, this cruelty ſhocks my nature; I am ſick of the narrow principles, whereby this ſtate is conducted; I am aſhamed of my relation, as a Greek, to this ſelfiſh little people. Happy are we, my friend, to be adopted into a better country, where, ſafe in the protection of one common lord, the inhabitants of diſtant climates are equally encouraged to ſerve the public; where the regiſters of honor are open without diſtinction to Lydians and Medes, to Bactrians

and Ionians; where thoſe, who cover the fields with grain, and the mountains with plantations, are eſteemed and rewarded; where domeſtic affection extends even to ſlaves, and a captive Greek often ſhares the friendſhip of his lord. Full of ſuch ideas, how can I look upon theſe butchers of their ſervants, their husbandmen, their uſeful fellow-citizens, their valiant fellow-ſoldiers? Yet ſuch is the force of cuſtom even in noble minds! Soon after the execution, I waited upon BRASIDAS, who ſhewed no marks of concern or remorſe, though forty of the unhappy men were committed to his care, and periſhed under his inhoſpitable roof. Adieu.

W.

LETTER CLXIV.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES.

I Was at a Sympoſium * an evening or two ago, where SOCRATES, ALCIBIADES, ARISTOPHANES, and ſeveral other philoſophers and wits, were preſent. When we parted, the comic poet, (with whom I have been acquainted ever ſince the affair of the ſar-

* It is probable from the beginning of this letter, that the Sympoſium of Plato (the ſubject of which is love) took it's riſe from a real converſation. The interlocutors mentioned here are exactly the ſame with thoſe introduced there. ARISTOPHANES makes a very odd figure in it; and though the philoſopher has taken no notice of CLEANDER, yet he was certainly of the party. The intelligent reader muſt be pleaſed with tracing out the minutiæ of antiquity, when they concern ſuch Sympoſia as thoſe, which Plato has recorded.

caſtical

caſtical* iambics,) was in ſuch good humor, that he invited me to his houſe the next day; and promiſed to indulge me in the reading of a new comedy, which is to be preſented to the judges at the approaching feſtival. Thou mayeſt imagine, HYDASPES, I readily complied with him, partly becauſe I was curious to know what he had upon the anvil; and partly becauſe I hoped to be better informed on ſome points relating to the Greek theatre, by one, who has ſo great a ſhare in ſupporting its reputation. And in truth I had much entertainment from my viſit.

As ſoon as I entered, he received me with his uſual vivacity, and ſaid, "Let us loſe no time in compliments, but proceed to buſineſs." Accordingly he at once unlocked his cabinet, and drew out many rough unfiniſhed ſketches of plays. He asked my judgment of ſome of them, and then ſat down to read the performance, which I expected with impatience. The title was drawn from the ſecond order of men in the ſtate, who are called Ἱππεῖς, and compoſe the chorus. The turn of it was a virulent ſatyr upon CLEON and the people. The firſt perſons, who appear, are DEMOSTHENES and NICIAS in the habit of ſlaves. They complain of a ſteward, who has got into the houſe, cajoles the good old maſter of it, and pretends to act the tyrant. As a ſpecimen of what it contains, I will copy one ſpeech from it, which is in the mouth of DEMOSTHENES. "Our maſter, ſays he, is old, deaf, choleric, capricious, and an huge lover of beans†. It

* See Vol. II. Letter XC.

† Alluding to the way of voting in uſe among the Athenians.

is not long ſince he took it into his head to buy a Paphlagonian * into his family, who had been formerly a currier, a fellow of intrigue, and a noted informer. This currier finds means to work himſelf into his good graces, by low craft and inſinuation. "Good people of Athens, ſays he, you have taken a great deal of pains to day. Eat, drink, and be eaſy. Be pleaſed to receive your oboli. Will you permit me to entertain you with a banquet?" And the raſcal triumphs in this impertinence. He has won upon his ſilly maſter, and deprives the reſt of the ſlaves of whatever is their due. It was my good fortune to do well at Pylus, but he has taken from me the credit of the action. That plaguy leather thong, which he carries about with him, keeps us at diſtance; he amuſes the old fool with oracles; tells lies of us, for which we are beaten; then runs about the houſe, and terrifies the ſervants: "Don't you ſee HYLAS? he cries. I got that dog whipped. By JUPITER if you don't buy me off, you ſhall be ſerved in the ſame manner." If we bribe him, it is ſafe with us. If not, our maſter falls a kicking and cuffing, and we ſuffer for our honeſty."

The whole play is written in this ſtyle, and is a ſtrange mixture of wit and nonſenſe, of fact and allegory; for it is a common thing with ARISTOPHANES to go out of his allegory, and talk openly of what he means by

* CLEON is called a Paphlagonian, not becauſe he was of that country, but (as the commentators ſay) becauſe it furniſhed ARISTOPHANES with a conceit to expreſs his rough and paſſionate character, the Greek word [παφλάζω, *ferveo*] conveying that idea.

it.

it. As ſoon as theſe complaints are over, they conſider of methods to redreſs them. At laſt they take a reſolution to ſet up one AGORACRITUS, a fellow of mean extraction and employment, in oppoſition to CLEON. They meet him as he is going to market, and ſalute him with a farcical reſpect: "Be thou the ſaviour of the city, and of us." The man does not underſtand them, but they make him a politician againſt his will. He tells them, that he can ſcarce read, and has not one qualification for a ſtateſman. They anſwer, it is no matter for that; he has a great deal of impudence, and a noiſy tongue, which are the proper talents. They exhort him not to be afraid of CLEON, for he will not appear himſelf; ſince no artiſt in Athens would dare to form a mask after his likeneſs. He is promiſed the aſſiſtance of the chorus, of the ſpectators, and of the Gods. CLEON comes in, and after much ridiculous diſpute between them before NICIAS in this act, and before the old man through the reſt, where they forge oracles one againſt another, and contend, which ſhall make the beſt dinners for him, CLEON owns himſelf defeated, and retires. The ſcene, to prepare the audience for this event, is a parody of that noble one in the OEDIPUS of Sophocles, where the king examines LAIUS's ſhepherd concerning his birth. AGORACRITUS, (by whom, it ſeems, HYPERBOLUS, a man riſing in favor with the people, is deſigned,) produces an oracle, in which the qualities of CLEON's ſucceſſor are delineated. CLEON diſcerns, by degrees, that his antagoniſt is the man, and at laſt falls into deſpair. The comedy concludes with joy on the

the part of AGORACRITUS; he releaſes two women, whom CLEON had impriſoned, and whom he calls the ancient alliances between Athens and Lacedæmon.

"I hope, ſaid I, ARISTOPHANES, that no-body has over-heard us; for though you are not afraid to write, or even to publiſh theſe pieces, yet I am afraid to be privy to them. You may remember, how I ſuffered two years ago for being thought to have a ſhare in the iambics. I know you are at open war with CLEON; but it is above my genius to encounter with miniſters of ſtate. I do aſſure you, that I never heard any thing, which gave me ſo much pleaſure for the ſmartneſs, and ſo much pain for the boldneſs of it." The poet laughed; "CLEANDER, replied he, if you were an Athenian, and talked to me in this way, I might be tempted to expoſe your weakneſs in one of my comedies, and the chorus ſhould point at you in the pit. But as you are an Epheſian, I forgive the prejudices, in which you were educated to reverence or fear even bad governors.". "Nay, returned I, there are perſons in the city of the ſame ſentiments with me. Have not you ſaid, ſomewhere in this very play, that you could procure no vizor to reſemble CLEON?" "Yes, ſaid he, and I can tell you further, that my two beſt actors have refuſed the part; ſo I ſhall perform it myſelf." "The character, replied I, which ſhould give moſt offence, is that of the old fellow, whom you have repreſented to be the tool of the ignorant and deſigning. CLEON is but one; and the old man is a multitude." "It is for that reaſon, ſaid ARISTOPHANES, every body will pretend to be pleaſed with it. No individual

dividual imagines he is aimed at in a ſatyr on the collective body. Each owns its juſtneſs, when applied to his neighbour, and thinks, in not ſeeming to be touched with it, he actually removes the point of it from himſelf. But CLEON being particularly ridiculed, and of a proud impatient nature, he will endeavor to gain ſome revenge. It makes me happy, that I can mortify his vanity in the height of his power."

"We have laughed a great deal, interrupted I, ARISTOPHANES; you ſhall now permit me to change the ſcene from mirth to ſober inquiry, and from humour to philoſophy. When I reflect on the origin of dramatic writing, I often wonder at the different progreſs of tragedy and comedy. The firſt has filed off its roughneſſes both of diction and ſentiment, and is poliſhed into a juſt repreſentation of human action. The laſt is not an artful exhibition of the real nature of men, but an uncouth aggravation of its deformities, and retains much of the licence of THESPIS's cart. It was uſual for the ſtrollers, who followed the fortunes of that poet, as they paſſed through the towns of Greece, to railly the foibles, and ſatyrize the vices of the people. Is that practice forgotten? Far from it. You do the very ſame thing at this day by encouragement, which was then done by connivance. Nay, ridicule has enlarged its province, and takes the range of the ſtate, as well as of domeſtic conduct, and treats the meaſures of a nation with the ſame levity, wherewith it handles the follies of private men." "Why, ſaid ARISTOPHANES, if I muſt be grave with you now, it ſhall be to defend my laughing at another time.

Are

Are you ſerious in what you urge; or do you only contend, after the manner of a Sophiſt, for the exerciſe of your logic and eloquence? If you are ſerious, I intreat you to conſider, whether it is not the employment of philoſophers to ſtrip things of their falſe colors, and repreſent them in their native ones. You call it levity to ridicule the abſurd management of the public. But if the public deſerves it, what ſhall protect it from the ſtrokes of that keen weapon? Addreſs it with flattery, you ſpoil its ſenſe, ſuffer it to acquieſce in what is wrong, give a ſanction to that formality, which forbids the approaches of advice, and do an injury to its intereſts. Addreſs it with freedom, you improve its underſtanding, ſet it on its guard, teach it to deſpiſe formality, and maintain the honor of your country." "That will bear a debate, returned I. Wiſe men have expreſſed a contempt for ceremony and external diſtinctions, till they have let fools into the ſecret, and begin to find the want of them for their own ſecurity. There are ſome perſons in ſuch ſtations, and ſome bodies of men of ſuch importance, that they can do nothing, which is trifling in its conſequences, however frivolous in itſelf. So that, inſtead of beginning the laugh, we ſhould affect a ſolemn air, when we ſpeak of their actions. For in all, that concerns the public, even a miſtaken ſeriouſneſs may be regarded as virtue." "But ſuppoſe, rejoined he, that every application of ridicule, either to the faults of the public, of of particulars, is agreeable to the majority of a people." "And to ſpeak out fairly, ſaid I, it is that, which I do not comprehend. The Athenians excel the eaſtern monarchs in their encouragement

ment to theſe monitors. It is enough for the king of Perſia, that a ſlave daily reminds him, when he wakes, of his mortality; but he hires no ſlaves to ape the ſingularities of his manner, and tell him, that he is a tyrant and a fool. Yet this is a juſt image of what is done in Athens." "I perceive, ſaid ARISTOPHANES, the whole buſineſs of popular government is a myſtery to you." "If, continued I, the people corrected their errors, when they ſaw them; if they applied the ſcenes of ridicule to the purpoſes of ſerioufneſs; I ſhould admire their patience of cenſure, and applaud their wiſdom. But as the caſe now ſtands, they perſiſt in what is wrong, while they laugh at it, and laugh at what is right, while they approve, and ſhould practiſe it." "Is there any thing, replied ARISTOPHANES, ſo extraordinary in that conduct? Does not your friend SOCRATES ſneer at the popular religion, and yet conform to it? Does not EURIPIDES contemn the theology of the poets, and yet gravely uſe it?" "We ſhall never agree, reſumed I; but as I cannot underſtand, what influences the people in this point, ſo there is one thing, which I cannot underſtand in you. It is frequent with you to reproach the tragic poet with impiety; and your writings condemn a neglect of the worſhip enjoined by the legiſlator in ſeveral citizens, whoſe names your actors recite, and whoſe perſons they diſtinguiſh to the audience. At the ſame time you do not ſcruple to introduce thoſe very Deities in the loweſt and moſt abſurd lights; to repreſent them as the ſhadowy beings of an allegory; as either the deceivers, or the dupes of mortals." "By HERCULES, ſaid he, you begin to

be too ſolemn for me; but your objection is built on a miſtake. Have not you lived long enough in Athens to know, that the Græcians would no more bear a ridicule on the religion of their country from ARISTOPHANES, than they would bear an attack on moral virtue from your favorite *EURIPIDES? What then is it, which procures a toleration for me? I'll tell you. They know the difference between the fables of the poets, and the theology of the law-givers. The Gods of HOMER are viſionary characters; but the Gods of SOLON diſtribute real bleſſings to mankind. The JUPITER of poetry is a being compounded of the moſt depraved paſſions, which are incident to our frail nature; but the JUPITER of the ſtate is father and king of Gods and men. The former exiſts no where but in the debauched and irregular fancy of mythologiſts; but the latter was raiſed to heaven for his virtues, and remains there the object of univerſal adoration. So that a little attention will inform you, I take freedoms with that ſet of Deities, who are the creatures of poetic licence, but pay homage to thoſe, whoſe merit is either declared by the laws, or acknowledged by tradition." "Should I admit, returned I, that there is ſome weight in your anſwer, yet I am convinced, that many minds are not capable of conceiving it. When the vulgar liſten to the tales of the prieſt, do you think they ſeparate the hidden meaning of what he ſays, from the groſs wrapper, in which he offers it? Can you then fancy, that they reaſon nicely on the Gods of law-givers, and the Gods of poetry, while they are liſtening to a comedy? But

* See Vol. II. Letter XCIII.

though

though you treat the fables of ORPHEUS, LINUS, MUSÆUS, HOMER, with ſo little ceremony; yet you might be more candid methinks to the verſes of their deſcendants, ÆSCHYLUS, SOPHOCLES, and EURIPIDES, whom you laugh at, to the diſcredit of their compoſitions, and the injury of your own." "How ſo! cried he. A good parody is a compliment to the poet, becauſe none but the beſt things are honored with it; and it is to the purpoſe of my plays, becauſe it adds to the entertainment, which they give." "I maintain both parts of my aſſertion, ſaid I. The firſt, becauſe every ſwelling expreſſion of tragedy or empty line is aggravated without mercy; the laſt, becauſe your dialogue would be more proper and natural, and therefore more agreeable without it. Beſides, parody has ſomething of the mimic, not the poet; of buffoon imitation, not original invention. It is for this reaſon I could wiſh to ſee comedy on a different footing from the preſent. If the tragic writers draw their plot from the marvellous, they conduct it in ſuch a manner, as to lower it to the probable; but if you lay down a plot, which is probable, you manage it ſo fantaſtically, as to heighten it to the marvellous. The ſpeeches, which they inſert in the converſations of the drama, conduce to unravel the main incident; but you frequently throw in an abſurd incident for the ſake of introducing a ſpeech. Perſonal reflections ought likewiſe to be avoided. Expoſe the vice, without inſulting the vicious. Let the check of conſcience reſtrain, without exciting a general contempt or odium. As the painter formed the idea of his VENUS from compounding the moſt per-

fect features of different beauties; ſo the poet ſhould collect the moral deformities of his characters from that variety, which the weakneſs of mankind affords him: as the bee extracts an uniform and original ſweetneſs from the borrowed flavors of innumerable plants; ſo the gall of ſatyr and comedy ſhould be drawn from all the vices and follies of the times." "CLEANDER, interrupted ARISTOPHANES, I ſhall not contend with you, though I have clearly the better in this controverſy. You remind me of what THUCYDIDES obſerved of PERICLES; "Whenever I have thrown him, ſaid he, he has the impudence to aſſert the contrary, and I am almoſt infatuated enough to believe him."

The charge of impudence from the comic poet was ſo unexpected and emphatical, that, though it ſhould have put him out of countenance, it unſettled me; and I haſtened away from him abruptly.

C.

LETTER CLXV.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER. From Taoces.

THERE is a ceſſation, thou knoweſt, from all kinds of buſineſs, during the great feſtival*, which ends the year. Thoſe days of leiſure ARTÆUS determined to give to a part of his family, who are almoſt tempted to repine at his conſtant and ſucceſsful ap-

* According to HYDE de Relig. Vet. Perſ. the principal feaſt of the ancient Perſians was on the laſt ten days of the year, in memory of the creation, which they ſuppoſed was then completed. This muſt be the feſtival here alluded to.

plication

plication to his country's ſervice; ſo ſeldom does it permit us to enjoy the moſt condeſcending parent, the moſt improving companion. He now ſaw Tacces for the firſt time, and was wonderfully ſtruck with the ſituation and the improvements ſo adapted to it. He ſpent whole days among the woods; he entered into the deſign of every building and plantation; and would here and there propoſe the leading down a ſtream, or the gaining a new point of view, with the greateſt propriety. One evening, as we were ſitting round him upon the great terras, that commands the proſpect of the gulf, and he was obſerving to us the freſhneſs of the air, the ſmoothneſs of the ſea, and the tender colours of the ſky juſt after ſun-ſet; my PARMYS, laying her hand gently upon his, ſaid, with that unaffected ſweetneſs peculiar to her, "My deareſt father will not imagine, I wiſh his pleaſure leſs, when I take notice, how great it is. But I own myſelf ſurprized to find you thus affected by theſe beauties of ours; and that the multitude of affairs, with which you are perpetually ſurrounded, has not extinguiſhed the taſte for theſe airy delights, the amuſements of the idle and the ſpeculative."

"To what an uncomfortable ſtate, replied he, would you reduce us, that, becauſe theſe natural, theſe unmixed pleaſures are rarely indulged to us, we muſt be denied even the power of feeling them! Believe me, the very different way of life I am in, and the ſhort intervals it allows me of quiet and retirement, do but quicken my reliſh for them. Not that variety is their principal charm: there is ſomething in their very nature to excite the deſires of a good mind; and it muſt

be a narrow and illiberal ſpirit, and qualified merely for the forms and drudgery of affairs, that can be ſo immerſed in buſineſs, as not to look beyond it. We ſerve the public, for it is our duty; our allegiance obliges us, our friends, our families demand it of us. But there is a term to all theſe labors, which the greateſt have ever been ready to ſeize. When the vigour of their age has been given to their country, and the charge of indolence and ſelfiſhneſs can no longer be brought againſt them, ſuch a retreat, ſuch a manner of life, as your's at Taoces, has been the end of their wiſhes. Your CLEANDER, continued he, turning to me, is full of theſe ideas; he thinks his political life has been long enough; and in every diſpatch to his patron GOBRYAS ſighs after the banks of the Pactolus, where the king has aſſigned him the reward of his faithful ſervices."

"Is he then about leaving Greece?" ſaid I haſtily.

"No, replied ARTÆUS, the preſent conjuncture will ſcarce permit it. But he has behaved ſo well in all parts of his employment, and his deſire of retirement is ſo ſincere, that I am not for baniſhing him longer than is neceſſary, and ſhall aſſiſt his petition the firſt opportunity, that offers."

Thou wilt believe, dear CLEANDER, that I was highly pleaſed to hear my father talk thus. Upon ſuch occaſions, where his good nature and humanity are to be exerted, he ever ſpeaks leſs than he intends; and I cannot but promiſe myſelf, that thou wilt ſoon be reſtored to the arms of thy friends. Here thou wilt be moſt cordially welcome. I am impatient to make thee acquainted with every particular of my happineſs. For

happy

happy I am in my new ſituation to the extent of my deſires. Not, becauſe, as ſucceſſor to SISAMNES, I am thus early ranked among the principal ſatraps, and command in Hyrcania; nor that, when I look round from this lofty promontory, my own poſſeſſions compoſe the various landſcape. It is not the palaces, the villas, the elegant furniture, the magnificent equipage, that I would boaſt to thee. SISAMNES gave infinitely more than all theſe, when with his dying hand he gave me his daughter. Her figure, her air, her voice, all expreſs that graceful eaſe and engaging ſoftneſs, which run through her whole character. But the humbleſt ſenſe of her own excellencies, and a ſhineſs of applauſe, however deſerved, permit her friends alone to know, that to the delicate beauties of a female mind ſhe adds the ſtronger features of a manly underſtanding; an apprehenſion inſtantly to ſeize, and a taſte exactly to determine the merit of whatever comes before her; a firmneſs, yet only tried in the little occurrences of life, but which may be equally depended upon in the moſt important caſes; a popular benevolence, which makes all, who approach her, eaſy; and a nicety in her friendſhips, which keeps off the forward and undeſerving. Fondly to lean on ſuch a boſom, to have ſuch a heart entirely mine to retire to, can I form a wiſh beyond it? Here, perplexed with court-factions, and fatigued with public buſineſs, I may depoſit all my cares; think them over again, aſſiſted by the trueſt good ſenſe; or loſe all thought of them in the tendereſt endearments. And here, in my happier hours, theſe ſeaſons of domeſtic life, do I find a perpetual ſource of delights; a

taſte for the ſame amuſements, a ſpirit to invent new ſcenes of entertainment, and an unaffected compliance with thoſe compoſed by others.

For we here are not in ſolitude; a ſelect party of friends ſhare with us, and improve the pleaſures of the place. AZANE never leaves us; ſhe is of a turn more lively and eager than my PARMYS, but has a heart amiable as her ſiſter's. The daughter of the Deſtoor* of Sogdiana was educated in this family, and is looked upon as a part of it. You know her ſufficiently by the Hymn to the Night, which CHARICLES brought you; and your Greek compliment of the tenth Muſe is, I aſſure you, by no means an extravagant one. Our company of the other ſex are the old partners of my Bactrian ſtudies; and ſome of our young nobility, who are connected with me in the public ſervice, and whoſe conduct and way of thinking give them ſtill a more honourable diſtinction. Thou knoweſt, CLEANDER, how I enjoy ſuch a ſociety as this; PARMYS and AZANE are no leſs taken with it. But what a wretch ſhould I have been, had I entered into a family incapable of theſe rational entertainments? And when I look round the court, how do I wonder at my good fortune? As faſhion has a ſtronger influence over the fair ſex, they are more generally degenerated from the old Perſian ſeverity, than we are. The becoming reſerve, the houſhold-virtues of our mothers, are the ſubjects of ridicule; and the womens apartments have loſt that air

* Deſtoor, a title of dignity among the Magi. HYDE writes it Deſtur, and ſays there was one of them over the prieſts of every province. Note by the Tranſlator.

of

of inviolable ſanctity, that uſed to ſurround them. An eternal round of trifling pleaſures leaves no room for improvement or reflection; weakens the nobler faculties, and expoſes the mind to any impreſſions. Hence ridiculous fears, impotent paſſions, extravagant deſires, and a long train of follies too often ending in vice and infamy.

At Taoces thou wilt meet with none of this riot and impertinence; all here is calm and natural; the manners of the laſt age, ſet off by the elegance of ours. Make haſte then, and join in our converſations; they are imperfect without thee. As ſoon as ever the ſtate of Græcian politics can ſpare thee, throw thyſelf at the feet of ARTAXERXES, diſpatch the laſt buſineſs before the council of ſeven, and begin thy retirement with us. For think not, we will ſuffer the improvements, thou art projecting at thy Lydian farms, to engroſs thee. Here I can promiſe you an abſolute liberty of enjoying your friends, or your own reveries; people, who will receive you chearfully, not purſue you impertinently; and a moſt attentive audience to every circumſtance of your negotiations, and the greateſt wonders of your travels.

W.

LETTER CLXVI.

CLEANDER to HARBAHAL of Sidon, admiral of the Perſian gallies. From Athens.

I No ſooner heard, that by the favour of our gracious monarch thou wert promoted to the diſtinguiſhed rank, which thou now holdeſt in his ſervice, than I determined to congratulate thee in the moſt affectionate manner.

My private friendſhip and gratitude for the bravery, which thou once exertedſt in reſcuing me with thy ſingle trireme out of the hands of that terror of the Mediterranean, the pirate SOSTRATUS, oblige me not to be ſilent on this occaſion. But my zeal for the honor and ſafety of the empire, and my thorough conviction, how much thy advancement will contribute towards both, render the ſatisfaction I take in it more meritorious, by heightning it from a ſocial into a public virtue. Let me firſt, like a good ſubject, applaud the wiſdom of ARTAXERXES, who, inſtead of following the too numerous precedents of former reigns, in throwing away ſo important a poſt upon ſome upſtart favourite, as the price of court-ſervility and mean arts, or an indolent prince of the blood, ruled by men of worſe principles, but more diſcernment, than himſelf, has, on the contrary, filled it with the ableſt and moſt active naval officer in his dominions.

It is from thy firmneſs and experience, valiant HARBAHAL, that I expect a very conſiderable reform in the

the management of our fleets. Thy duty to thy ſovereign calls upon thee, not to ſuffer his ſervice to be neglected in the manner it has hitherto been. Thy parts and knowledge will ſuggeſt the fitteſt methods of improvement; and the genius of the preſent vigorous adminiſtration will enable thee to carry them into execution with ſpirit and effect.

I have often been offended at that ſevere and inconvenient practice, which prevails as well in manning our fleets, as recruiting our armies; I mean that of forcing the rude inhabitants of the villages to enliſt themſelves upon any exigency, and driving them in chains on board the ſhips, which are thus filled with unskilful, uſeleſs, and diſcontented ſailors, ready either for mutiny, or flight; whilſt the provinces are drained of thoſe, whoſe induſtry ſhould enrich the ſoil with tillage, and adorn the face of it with plantations.

Another great and growing evil in our fleets has been a remiſſneſs of diſcipline. I have heard ſuch, as were well acquainted with the tranſactions of that time, complain, that, during the long war againſt the Greeks, many inſtances were notorious, where the commanders had failed in their duty, had fled before an inferior force, abandoned the merchants under their convoy to the enemy, and miſt the moſt favourable opportunities of acting; and yet not the leaſt puniſhment enſued, and ſcarce the ſlight diſgrace of a reprimand was inflicted upon the offenders.

I am afraid, the ruſt and inactivity of peace has not much contributed towards the neceſſary work of reformation in theſe particulars. I have heard, that many officers

officers have arrived at preferment in the gallies, which thou commandeſt, whoſe names, in times of danger and action, would not have been heard of. Let it be thy care to anſwer the expectations of the public, by diſcountenancing ſuch abuſes. Suppreſs the burdenſom method, in which the numbers of the ſhips companies are made up, by erecting nurſeries for ſeamen, and inviting them by rewards and good treatment from all parts of the empire. Repreſent with a decent boldneſs to the miniſtry, when improper advancements are mediated; nor be afraid of loſing an intereſt in the inner palace, which will be amply repaid to thee in the affection of the ſailors, the eſteem of the worthy and diſintereſted, and the weight thou muſt at laſt acquire in the councils of thy prince.

Excuſe, my gallant friend, the freedom I have taken in offering my ſentiments, inconſiderable as they are, upon matters, which have occaſionally fallen under my obſervation, and in which thou haſt been converſant thy whole life. But the example I have before my eyes of this republic, which merely by the ſtrength of its naval force has raiſed itſelf to ſuch an envied height of reputation and power, muſt frequently turn the attention of a thinking man to ſpeculations of this nature, and may, perhaps, excite thy curioſity to know, what remarks my long reſidence here has enabled me to make on the advantages, which Athens has ſecured to herſelf by the extent of her commerce, and the protection of her floating bulwarks.

The

* The former was, before this war broke out, in so flourishing a condition, that scarce a merchant-ship of any of the neighbouring states navigated these seas, without taking the Piræeus in her voyage; and not only found the readiest and best vent for her own cargo, but replaced it either with the native commodities of the place, oil, honey, and corn, or those of foreign countries, which are always laid up in the well-stored magazines of its traders. Nor need I mention how much, by the universal resort of foreigners, the Athenians have enriched their peculiar dialect, above the rest of Greece, with the choicest and most significant expressions, without debasing its purity and elegance by the mixture. Their correspondence with Sicily, Cyprus, and the coasts of Asia Minor, has always supplied them with plenty and variety of the best provisions at no extravagant rates. A more extraordinary circumstance, which I cannot help adding under this head, is, that Athens is the only state in Greece, or any other country I know of, where a general opulence enables even the lower kind of people to live with ease and convenience, and that chiefly by the frequency of public sacrifices, at which large doles of flesh and bread are distributed to the poor, and the number of edifices, as baths, gymnasia, &c. erected at the public charge for the use of all the citizens. And notwithstanding the unavoidable inconveniences, with which commerce, and the benefits

* Many of the observations in the following part of this letter are confirmed by XENOPHON in his tracts, περὶ πολιτείας, and περὶ πόρων.

derived

derived from it, muſt always be embarraſſed, during a ſtate of hoſtility between nation and nation, it may eaſily be proved, that the Peloponneſian trade and navigation have ſuffered in an infinitely larger proportion than the Athenian, by the continuance of this breach. For ſince the action at Pylus, the fleets of the latter are maſters of the ſea without controul, and not only ſuperior to the ſcattered ſquadrons of the enemy, but numerous enough to protect their own commerce, and interrupt their rivals; and, what is of the higheſt conſequence, to oblige even neutral powers to carry on an almoſt excluſive traffic with this republic, and not to export their naval ſtores, or the products of their looms and their mines, without its knowledge and conſent.

Another principal and diſtinguiſhing ſuperiority, which the naval ſtrength of the Athenians has afforded them, that through the whole courſe of the war, and which alone has proved ſufficient to diſconcert the beſt-framed projects of their adverſaries, is, that whenever the allies have taken the ſureſt method of diſtreſſing them, by laying waſte Attica, inveſting its metropolis, and obliging the proprietors of the land to cry out for a peace, an Athenian fleet has never failed to prevent the bad conſequences of their deſigns, by keeping their maritime places in perpetual alarm, haraſſing the coaſts, perhaps ſeizing an important poſt, (as they have done this year in Laconia,) and obliged the enemies, before their troops had made any progreſs, to recal them for their own defence; inſomuch, that, all circumſtances conſidered, though particular perſons have ſuffered by captures, and the owners of the ſoil been conſiderably impoveriſhed,

impoveriſhed, the Athenians having been able to ſupport their trade, and to obtain ſeveral ſignal advantages, particularly one this ſummer, which is pretty deciſive, may be ſaid to weigh heavieſt in the balance of Greece; and unleſs they make the object of the war more extenſive than they can well take in, or feel the influence of Perſia in the oppoſite ſcale, muſt, in all human probability, come out of it with an encreaſe both of reputation and territory.

I might carry this ſpeculation ſtill further, and aſſert, that were the ſeat of the Athenian government and their naval ſtrength transferred from the continent into a neighbouring iſland, (though of no greater extent and fruitfulneſs than Attica,) their power would be eſteemed twice as conſiderable. For not to inſiſt upon the additional ſecurity againſt conqueſt and invaſion, which would reſult from the ſea's being their barrier on all ſides, it would entirely remove the greateſt danger, to which the republic is expoſed in its preſent ſituation; for theſe yearly devaſtations are the grounds of perpetual animoſities in one part of the citizens againſt the other. The owners of the land, and their tenants, (a very uſeful and conſiderable part of the community,) ſee their lands ravaged, their farms laid in ruins, and their families deprived of ſubſiſtence, by the frequent incurſions of the Peloponneſians; whilſt the trierarchs and land-officers are enriching themſelves with the plunder of the enemy, and from the protection afforded to trade, the Piræeus is crowned with the veſſels of its opulent merchants, either carrying out the commodities of Athens, or bringing back thoſe of other countries in return.

return. The land-holders being therefore with good reaſon weary of the continuance of the war, are reproached by the oppoſite party with wiſhing well to the arms of Lacedæmon. The caſe would be infinitely worſe, if the allies were to make themſelves maſters of any conſiderable fortreſs in Attica, which by an unaccountable miſconduct they have not hitherto attempted. The internal feuds might then riſe ſo high, as to become really dangerous to the ſtate; the clamors of peace almoſt at any rate muſt encreaſe, and whilſt foreign aſſiſtance might be ſo eaſily called in by thoſe, who diſliked the proceedings of the majority, the occaſion would be inviting to ſuch as were determined to riſk the public ſafety for the ſake of gratifying their own revenge.

The concluſion from what I have been ſaying is evident, that an inſular ſituation would go to the root of this encreaſing evil, and tend to unite the two jarring intereſts, which unhappily prevail at the preſent juncture within the walls of Athens. What has been already advanced, may likewiſe inculcate another maxim, that without an extended commerce firſt obtained, the revenues of Perſia would never raiſe a fleet able to venture a battle for the empire of the ſea, though they were all employed in that ſingle ſervice. It is conſtant practice, and variety of maritime employment, that produces a hardy and numerous breed of ſailors, of experienced and gallant officers. It is trade alone, which can improve naval architecture by exerciſing the ingenuity of able ſhipwrights and artificers, and keeping them in conſtant buſineſs. Without the demands, which trade occaſions,

occaſions, the magazines will never be ſufficiently furniſhed with regular ſupplies of military ſtores, and other naval proviſions, to repair a defeat, or improve a victory.

From theſe ſhort hints, ſagacious HARBAHAL, I leave it to thy judgment to pronounce, whether the moſt powerful and wealthy monarch muſt ever think of eſtabliſhing his dominion on the floods, unleſs he firſt encourages, for a long courſe of years, the arts of peace, navigation, and commerce. If in any future times ſome enterprizing prince ſhould ariſe, and after his utmoſt efforts flatter himſelf with having carried ſo prepoſterous a ſcheme into practice, be aſſured, his imaginary empire over that fickle element will ſink on the firſt reverſe of fortune, and in its duration reſemble the tranſitory inſect of the Hypanis *, which outlives not the day of its nativity. Farewel.

P.

LETTER CLXVII.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS.

IF the religion of Perſia wanted any other recommendation, than its agreeableneſs to the genuine and uncorrupted dictates of reaſon; if it required any compariſon with others, to ſhew its ſuperiority, and ſet off its excellence to advantage, I know of none, that would anſwer the purpoſe better, than the Athenian.

* A river in Sarmatia, now called the Bog.

The

The one is a ſteady and uniform plan, wherein the notion of one ſupreme being, the eſſential duties, that flow from thence, and the ſame ſcheme of religious ſervice, have been kept pure and unchanged through a ſucceſſion of many ages. The other is always in an unſettled and fluctuating ſtate, ever increaſing the catalogue of its divinities, and conſequently altering the ceremonial of its worſhip. For the religious inſtitutions of Athens have all along been conformable to the cuſtoms, and gone through the gradual refinements of civil life; and beſides her ſingular complaiſance in adopting the Gods of all other countries, with whom ſhe has any intercourſe, ſhe finds frequent occaſions of admitting new ones of her own by a ſolemn act of the great council.

Whether their minds here are not enough enlarged to have any notion of a Deity, whoſe comprehenſive view can take in the whole compaſs of the creation, and whoſe power can regulate all the various parts of nature; or whether they think, that the adminiſtration of ſo vaſt and extenſive a province muſt diſquiet the mind, and diminiſh the happineſs of any being; however this be, they divide the government of the world among a number of tutelary divinities, each of which exerciſes a kind of local juriſdiction, and preſides with uncontrouled and independent authority over his own particular diſtrict. As each has a peculiar mode of worſhip, his proper ſet of miniſters, and diſtinguiſhing catalogue of rites, their intereſts are happily kept ſeparate, and they ſubſiſt without any interfering or enmity.

Each

Each religious ſyſtem, circumſcribed, as it were, within the orb of its own influence, has no malign aſpect towards any other; but their reſpective votaries, ſatisfied with the free exerciſe of the ſervice, which is appointed to be paid to their patron God, entertain no jealouſies about, nor are inclined to call in queſtion, the pretenſions of the reſt.

But however confined and limited in their authority the Athenians ſuppoſe theſe preſiding powers to be, they are careful to make their religious application to them at ſtated times, beſides ſuch ſeaſons, as more particularly incline them to apply for their aſſiſtance; for they think nothing happens without their cognizance, or can be brought to a happy iſſue without their concurrence. Their manner of ſupplicating is with green boughs of laurel or olive in their hands, twiſted round with wool, and with garlands on their heads; all which particularities have a meaning, but too myſtical or refined to be entered into. The poſture of the petitioner is different on different occaſions; but the humility of it is ſuited in ſome ſort to the greatneſs of the diſtreſs the ſupplicant is in, and the dignity of the Divinity. They ſometimes proſtrate themſelves on the threſholds of the temples; ſometimes with reverential awe kiſs the feet, or embrace the knees; or, if they are more ſanguine in their expectations of aſſiſtance, preſume to touch the chin or cheeks of the ſacred ſtatues; on which, as they are viſible repreſentations of their Deities, intended to excite or enliven their piety, they are not ſparing in the ornaments they beſtow, either as to

the niceneſs of the workmanſhip, or coſtlineſs of the materials.

How much better, if any images or outward exhibitions of the Deity are neceſſary in our devotional exerciſes; how much more fitted to heighten our admiration, as well as inform the underſtanding, are our Mithriac figures? For at the ſame time, that they make a more magnificent diſplay of the divine glory, and afford a more proper ſymbol of his preſence and emblem of his purity, they contribute to the improvement of the worſhippers, and ſerve to imprint on their minds a general knowledge of the planetary ſyſtem.

The Athenians are very particular, both in their public and private offices of devotion, in ſpecifying what teſtimonies of divine power they are deſirous of obtaining; and on ſome occaſions they mention ſuch of their allies, as they wiſh may ſhare with them in the benefits, they ask for. But the Spartans are more humble and reſerved in their petitions, modeſtly referring all events to the wiſe and gracious diſpoſal of their Deities, and only requeſting in general, what may moſt promote their honour, and conduce to their happineſs.

On ſome important and intereſting occaſions, they have public ſupplications of many days continuance; during which, as they are devoted wholly to religious matters, buſineſs of every other kind is ſuſpended. At theſe times the ſtatues of the Gods, which are ſuppoſed to be informed with ſome degree of intelligence, are often placed on beds of marble or wood, that they may ſhare perſonally in the entertainment inſtituted to their honour.

honour. When they are beſet with any imminent danger, they have petitionary hymns, in which they celebrate the glory of their tutelary Deity, and then invite him to reſide among them. His arrival is uſhered in with great form, and as ſoon as their difficulties are got over, his departure is attended with equal ſolemnity. When they are beſieging the cities of their neighbours, they have particular forms of evocation to draw over the guardian Gods of the place to their party. In theſe they promiſe them a moſt honourable reception; and unleſs they ſucceed in this application, they imagine all endeavours by fraud or force will be ineffectual.

Some, who pretend to a nearer intercourſe with the Gods, offer their petitions in an unknown tongue. Theſe words, they affirm, have a natural meaning, and were the original language of mankind; but their intention is doubtleſs to practiſe upon the credulous and unwary vulgar, who are apt to receive with the more reverence what they are not able to underſtand.

When they are ſeated on the hearth, the place conſecrated to the houſhold Gods, it is not uſual to make any verbal requeſts; their ſilence, and the ſadneſs of their garb, the aſhes, and the humility of their ſituation, being ſuppoſed to ſpeak with more force and energy of perſuaſion, than any expreſſion, that could be uttered. In caſes of extremity the petitioners ſometimes tear their hair in a frantic manner, and offer it to the Deity: This method of ſupplication is thought more expreſſive of their diſtreſs, and more likely to move compaſſion. But a cuſtom prevails at Sparta, that I can hardly mention without indignation and horror: at one of their

celebrated feſtivals they tear the backs of their youth with whips before an altar of DIANA; and think the blood, that is ſhed by that ſevere operation, acceptable to the Goddeſs. Their parents are uſually preſent, and encourage their ſons to bear this piece of pious diſcipline, with a reſolution worthy of a Laconian education. Is it not, venerable SMERDIS, bringing down the nature of divine beings too much to the human ſtandard, to ſuppoſe them to be prevailed upon by the mere earneſtneſs and importunity of their votaries? But to imagine, that they expect ſuch acts of unnatural rigour, or are pleaſed with the miſery of their creatures, is ſurely to aſſimilate them to tyrants, and pervert the goodneſs and rectitude of their diſpoſition to a reſemblance with the baſeſt of mankind.

G.

LETTER CLXVIII.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS.

OF all the parts of that compounded and multifarious worſhip, which is here in uſe, ſacrificing is eſteemed to be of the moſt conſequence, and is of courſe attended with the moſt ſolemnity. But it ſeems not now to be conſidered, according to its primary inſtitution, as a ſuitable expreſſion of men's gratitude and token of their dependance; but rather as a donation, made expreſsly to conciliate the favour of the Gods, and engage them to be more heartily in the intereſt of him, who beſtows it. When ſimple cakes and water, and the ſpontaneous productions of nature, were offered,

the

the efficacy of offerings was not ſuppoſed to conſiſt ſo much in the value of the thing, as in the warm emotions of a thankful heart. But now the more noble and coſtly the oblation, the more likely it is thought to anſwer the purpoſe of ingratiating the donor; and therefore it is not to be wondered at, if theſe religious entertainments are often furniſhed out with the utmoſt luxury and profuſion of expence.

The very altars, on which their ſacrifices are made, retain nothing of the primæval plainneſs. They were at firſt only little heaps of earth or turfs, ſet apart for the ſacred uſe, by a ſmall libation. But the conſecrations are now become a matter of great coſt and oſtentation; and they run into the greateſt extravagancies of fancy in the ſtructure of them, as to the figure, in which they are made, the materials of which they conſiſt, and the ornaments, by which they are diſtinguiſhed.

If any one ſhould judge of the ſtate of religion at Athens, by the number of its altars, he could not fail of receiving impreſſions very much in favour of their piety. For not only the temples, and mountains, and ſacred groves abound with them, but they are to be found in every place of concourſe, whether for buſineſs, amuſement, or exerciſe, in the fields and walks, the highways and hippodrome; ſo that ſome of them are always at hand for the civil purpoſes of ratifying private alliances, or public treaties; and whoever is in a fit of devotion, or caſe of difficulty, can hardly ever want an immediate opportunity of explaining his wants, or expreſſing his gratitude.

One circumſtance, inviolably obſerved in the ſituation of them, is peculiar enough. Such as are conſecrated to the cœleſtial Gods, are raiſed above the level of the ground; and ſuch as are appropriated to the infernal ones, are ſunk below it; the number of ſteps, by which the approach is made to every one, exactly marking out the rank and dignity, which each particular Deity holds in their ritual.

They draw near to theſe ſacred places, as being in ſome ſecret and inexplicable manner the ſuppoſed abode of their Divinities, with the utmoſt veneration; and ſome remarkable ſtrokes of divine reſentment have fallen upon ſuch, as have been daring enough to omit the leaſt tittle of this religious obſervance. One was ſaid to have been ſtruck with lightening, not long ago, for preſuming to approach an altar of JUPITER with unwaſhed hands. Slaves, perſons of immoral lives, or baſe birth, are entirely excluded from them, except in HERCULES's temple at Cynoſarges, where ſome indulgence is ſhewn to the laſt upon a very reaſonable account, becauſe that God himſelf lay under no ſmall ſuſpicion of illegitimacy.

The matter of their ſacrifices has always had a near affinity to the different methods of living, that obtained in different ages; though the beſt and choiceſt of every kind is with great care ſelected for theſe religious uſes. Of both which practices a very eaſy and obvious account may be given; for men have been generally ſo partial in their own favour, as to imagine, that the Gods would be beſt pleaſed with ſuch things, as give moſt pleaſure to themſelves; and thoſe beſides, who

are concerned in this act of worſhip, have always a certain portion of the offering aſſigned to them, and ſhare with the Gods in the entertainment. For the ſame reaſon perhaps it is, that cups are always to be preſented full, it being eſteemed irreverent to allot any thing for the Gods, that is not perfect in its kind; though wine was for a long time excluded from their ſacrificial feaſts, through a conceit, which the multitude had entertained, of its profaneneſs, on account of the vine's having ſprung from the blood of the Titans. At Sparta indeed, where they are leſs nice in what they eat, they are leſs ſcrupulous in what they offer.

At what time living creatures came to be ſlain, as proper offerings to the Gods, is not a ſettled point; as it is far from being a ſatisfactory one, why they were ſlain at all. But the true cauſe and date of this uſage, as well as I can learn from converſation, or written memorials, ſeem to be, that they began to be in uſe as ſacrifices, ſoon after they were in eſteem as food. The connexion between theſe things I have hinted at above. The labouring ox was indeed for ſome time ſpared at Athens; but importunate appetite at laſt prevailed, and the delicacy of his fleſh was an overmatch for every conſideration of uſe or gratitude; though a ſtrange cuſtom, which yet prevails here, ſeems to ſhew, that the Athenians are in ſome doubt as to the lawfulneſs of this practice; for the perſon, who has killed the victim, immediately retires, and leaves the axe behind him, to be proceeded againſt in a judicial way, as being moſt concerned in, and anſwerable for the guilt of the action.

The Athenians offer ſacrifices in return for benefits received, as well as in expectation of receiving them. As to the kind of theſe offerings, each Deity has his favourite and conſecrated animal. Their reaſons for ſuch appropriations are ſometimes intelligible; but they run generally into infinite ſubtilty and refinement. Some regard is likewiſe had to the circumſtances of the offerer, and the ſolemnity of the occaſion; from the pomp of the hecatomb, uſed commonly to diſtinguiſh the inauguration of kings, or triumphant return of conquerors, to the beggar's cheap and humble acknowledgment by only kiſſing his right hand. But I have ſometimes ſmiled at the expenſive and oſtentatious gratitude of one of our Græcian philoſophers, who ſacrificed a hundred head of cattle to the Gods, for the extraordinary aſſiſtance he had received in the diſcovery of a geometrical propoſition.

How much more agreeable to good ſenſe and the nature of things was the original plainneſs and ſimplicity of Athens in her religious worſhip, than after all her boaſted advances in arts and politeneſs! How much more conformable to that religion, over which thou preſideſt with ſo great faithfulneſs and dignity! which teaches us, that whatever or whenever we eat, we ſhould offer up a ſmall part of it to the ſupreme Being, out of a dutiful ſenſe of his bounty, and ſupplicate his forgiveneſs for the liberty we take in applying his creatures to our own ſupport and preſervation.

G.

LETTER

LETTER CLXIX.

SMERDIS to CLEANDER.

THE Greeks, CLEANDER, are in our armies, and our fleets. They traffic in all our provinces, and the court itſelf is not free from them. I think I find now and then a Perſian tinctured by their converſation. In diſcourſe with a friend, who is not the ſtricteſt obſerver of our religion and laws, I was amazed to hear him ſay, he thought himſelf under obligation to be virtuous, though the bleſſed OROMASDES had promiſed no reward to virtue. I declare to thee, the ſentiment was ſo new to me, that I did not know, whether to commend the diſintereſtedneſs, that appeared in it, or condemn the ſelf-ſufficiency of it, and the neglect it diſcovered of the bounty of OROMASDES.

"The great rule, ſaid he, of right and wrong is obvious to all; every ſociety ſuppoſes its members acquainted with it, and builds its laws thereupon. He, who will deny, that actions are diſtinguiſhable into honeſt, brave, generous, and their contraries, abjures his reaſon; the uſe of which is no other than to enable him to diſtinguiſh things, as they are in nature; and the man, who would ſtrip himſelf naked, and bask in the ſunſhine for coolneſs, or lie down upon a pointed rock for eaſe, acts as wiſely and properly, as he, who would count it the ſame to give an hungry perſon bread, or a ſtone; or to inflict ſtripes upon the innocent, and the guilty. The rule is eaſy and undeniable; to follow

follow it, is to act our proper part; to neglect it, is to deny our nature, and the nature of all things: it is a rule, which OROMASDES has not made for the government of our actions, but purſued it in his own. Before creation, he comprehended in his view the exact image of all things, though not yet in being; matter with all its variety of forms, relations, and effects; animal appetites, and rational powers. In this vaſt idea of innumerable parts he perceived ſome fit for ends, which others were not; that infinite uſe and beauty would reſult from the coaleſcence of theſe, and the ſeparation of thoſe. As an ingenious artiſt in contriving a curious machine examines and rejects the imperfect ſchemes, that occur to him, till he can collect from amongſt them the true model to work upon. Thus the almighty Artificer ſubmitted to work, according to the relations, which things muſt bear one to another; univerſal nature was copied from a model in the divine mind, in which we can obſerve no blemiſh, becauſe order was there preferred to confuſion, and truth to inconſiſtency.

After creation commenced the moral oeconomy of the Deity, which, according to the ſame rule of truth, will find an exact recompence for the virtuous, and a ſuitable vengeance for the wicked. But why? is it not becauſe this is treating human actions condignly; and the divine wiſdom cannot miſapply its rewards? The truly wiſe man then looks upon actions in the ſame light with God; he conſiders virtue as diſtinguiſhed in nature from vice, and thinks it amiable enough to be followed for its own ſake: and if the Almighty recompence

pence ſuch a conduct, he accepts that bounty with thankfulneſs, which was no motive to his actions. To follow a reward, and to follow virtue, are to him things widely different; the purſuit of this is ever honourable, and founded in reaſon; the other is no more than ſelf-intereſt and cunning, the baſeſt motives for the guidance of a reaſonable creature."

"My friend, ſaid I, I confeſs it is the curſed AHRIMAN alone, the author of miſrule, who would confound truth and falſhood, light and darkneſs; who would make his ſway univerſal by diſſolving the ties of virtue, which unite all the parts of the kingdom of OROMASDES. He indeed obſerves this rule of truth through all his works; for his wiſdom exhibits it to his view, and approves it, and nothing can divert him from acting according to it. But ſurely you would not, without any farther inducements, preſcribe the ſame rule to man, who would find ſuch difficulty in the obſervance, and a biaſs ſo frequently to decline from it. And ſhould we ſuppoſe, that the virtuous man, at the hazard of all his intereſts, purſues it throughout; will not this extraordinary paradox be the reſult, that the virtuous man excels his Creator, ſince he governs his actions by the ſame common rule, but with greater danger and diſintereſtedneſs? A deduction ſo clear, and at the ſame time ſo abſurd, is ſufficient to convince us, that our arguings are ſomewhere falſe.

To ſay the truth, happineſs ſo nearly touches every being, that it muſt be its firſt concern. Let that be ſecured, (as in the ſupreme Being it is beyond all poſſibility of change,) and then it will be at liberty to obſerve the

the beauty and force of this law; which I cannot but approve in its own nature, but ſhould be as ridiculous to purſue to my own miſery, as a poor man to ſquander away, out of an affected generoſity, the ſmall means neceſſary for his own preſervation. Diſintereſtedneſs is madneſs in a creature, who has conſtant intimations of his miſery and weakneſs; and unleſs ſelf-preſervation could be reconciled with the rule of virtue, this would not have been the meaſure of human actions. We truſt therefore, that OROMASDES will not let us ſuffer for our adherence to virtue; but that we ſhall be recompenſed for any interruption of our happineſs in its purſuit. Such a confidence enables us to act without apprehenſion, and brings us near to the circumſtances of the Deity, whoſe happineſs is altogether conſiſtent with the rule of his actions. As a philoſopher then I ſhould think, that the perfect law of truth was immediately, and for its own ſake, regarded by the Deity alone; and by all created beings through him. I do not hereby deny the univerſality of this law, but only take into it a conſideration of our dependance on him, whence we had our being. What more juſt than this? Nor is it ungenerous and mercenary, as you ſeem to think; for I would follow virtue ſteadily, while I might with tranquillity; and when I could not do this, I would ſtill follow virtue, provided you will let me aſſure myſelf, (what cannot be excluded from the mind of man,) that my conduct is approved by the Deity, and that he will ſometime vindicate it by his favour. And on my part, to ſhew all the diſintereſtedneſs, that a needy creature can do, I will not pretend to preſcribe terms to him,

nor

nor ask when, or where: though it be beyond the grave, and in worlds to come, I am contented; and hereby ſhew a generous confidence in my Maker."

This was my anſwer, CLEANDER; and I confeſs I know no better. All religion is declaredly on my ſide. I think too I have the authority of all legiſlators for my opinion of human nature, who do not expect our obedience to laws without promiſing proportionable advantages. Matter of fact ſpeaks aloud for me on every ſide; for where do we meet with general induſtry, courage, and virtues of every ſort, but under the protection and encouragement of a good monarch, who gives us reaſon to be aſſured, that our beſt efforts in the practice of our duty will be followed by ſomething more than the mere empty complacence, which attends it? H.

LETTER CLXX.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

CHARICLES arrived here laſt night from the court at Suſa, and put into my hands a diſpatch from thee, with ſome characters incloſed, which I ſhall not fail to make uſe of in any thing, that requires great ſecrecy. It is impoſſible for me to expreſs the concern and aſtoniſhment I felt, whilſt I read the account thou giveſt me of the king's illneſs. Every melancholy idea, every fatal conſequence crowded at once into mind. But how greatly was I revived by the ſurprizing good effect, with which a remedy out of HIPPOCRATES was adminiſtered! ALEXIAS well deſerves the honours he

he has received from the courtiers, who, as my nephew informs me, were preparing, when he took horſe, to congratulate the king upon his recovery.

I ſympathize with thee, noble ſcribe, in thy grief for the behaviour of TERITEUCHMES. It is ſcarce credible, that one, who bore the moſt diſtant affinity to thee, much leſs one, who by his long employment under thee, had opportunities of diſcerning the frequent proofs thou giveſt of fidelity, and an unexampled diſintereſtedneſs, ſhould act ſo corrupt, ſo vile a part, and make ſo ungrateful a return to all thy favours. The danger to myſelf was light, I aſſure thee, even in my own eſtimation, when compared with the detriment, which the king's affairs muſt have received, had his practices continued. At the ſame time thy friendly care on my account can never be enough acknowledged.

Surely there are times, when ARIMANIUS is buſy in ſowing the ſeeds of treachery amongſt mankind, and promoting the downfal of empires by internal commotions. He has at this juncture infatuated the governors of Cyprus and Ægypt, and dazzled their eyes with the deluſive glare of royalty and independance. **** ******** *deſunt cætera.* P.

* Note by the Tranſlator.] The Jewiſh tranſlator informs us, that the original has in this place received ſome damage from fire, ſo that the remainder of this important diſpatch is become abſolutely illegible. He could juſt diſcern the traces of letters unlike any he had before met with, which he ſuppoſes were the characters mentioned to have been ſent by CHARICLES, probably a kind of cypher. We cannot but condole with our readers on an accident, which has deprived them

them of a material ancedote relating to the above-mentioned governors, whoſe intended revolt was in all likelihood prevented by the vigilance and induſtry of CLEANDER and his patron; for we hear no more of it. It is no wonder, that the learned MESHOBAB, in the grief of his heart, proteſts, that he would willingly give up twice the number of pages in the Talmud, to recover thoſe, which are defaced in his Perſian MS.

The affair of TERITEUCHMES, from the want of GOBRYAS's letter, to which CLEANDER refers, is alſo very obſcure. Thus much appears, that he was a relation of the chief ſcribe, who had been employed in his office, and probably intruſted with affairs of conſequence; and that he betrayed what paſſed through his hands to PYTHON, but was detected, before his treachery had produced any bad effect. Thoſe, who love to amuſe themſelves with hiſtorical parallels, may compare this accident with one of the ſame nature, that happened to a very able miniſter, M. VILLEROY, ſecretary of ſtate to K. HENRY the IVth of France. NICOLAS DE L'HOSTE, his couſin and firſt commis, took a bribe of 1200 crowns per annum from the court of Spain, to give them advice of the moſt ſecret tranſactions in his maſter's department. After having continued this traiterous correſpondence for ſome years, he was diſcovered in a very odd manner. The whole ſtory, which is a curious one, may be found in SULLY's Memoirs, Vol. IV.

LETTER

LETTER CLXXI.

INTAPHERNES to CLEANDER.

WHILE thou art perhaps expecting a lively deſcription from the pen of HYDASPES of a birth-day ſolemnity, I alas! CLEANDER, am inditing a letter to thee in his ſtead, which muſt turn upon a very different ſcene, the melancholy obſequies of that HYDASPES, our amiable friend. Such is the generoſity of thy nature, that thou wilt, I dare ſay, lament with me his loſs, from the pureſt motives of a diſintereſted friendſhip; whilſt thoſe, who have too little of the tender paſſions in their conſtitution, to be much affected upon the like occaſions, cannot help beſtowing a tear on his memory.

The laſt birth-day of ARTAXERXES was celebrated with more than uſual pomp. When the days of public audience were expired, (during which the great king is ſeated on his ſplendid ſtate to receive the addreſſes of his ſatraps, with the preſents, that are ſent from every province of the empire,) then all that numerous multitude, which reſort to Suſa upon theſe occaſions, were feaſted in that great ſquare called the court of the garden of the king's palace*. The whole ſolemnity was conducted

* We have, in the firſt chap. of the book of Eſther, a full deſcription of the magnificence of the Perſian kings upon theſe public entertainments. We read of white, green, and blue hangings faſtned with cords of fine linnen and purple

conducted according to the ancient cuſtoms, which are well ſuited to the magnificence of the ſupreme Lord of the Eaſt. But there is one thing, which our preſent grief ſhould cauſe to be for ever baniſhed from theſe public rejoicings, that exceſs, which has been thought neceſſary to expreſs our loyalty upon ſuch occaſions, and has too often proved fatal to the beſt and moſt temperate of his ſubjects. The wiſdom of ARTAXERXES has long ſince diſavowed that ridiculous privilege, which he thought inconſiſtent with the dignity of our monarchs, that of drinking immoderately themſelves, and joining in the Perſic dance* at ſuch ſeaſons. But les us draw a veil over this indiſcretion, which perhaps

purple to ſilver rings and pillars of marble; that the beds were of gold and ſilver upon a pavement of red, blue, white, and black marble; and that the drinking veſſels were of gold, the veſſels being diverſe one from another; and royal wine in abundance, according to the ſtate of the king. We read likewiſe at the 8th verſe, that the cuſtom of compelling men to drink more upon ſuch occaſions, than would do them good, was very much diſcouraged by AHASUERUS. And as we have ſome reaſon to conclude, that the AHASUERUS there mentioned was the ſame with our ARTAXERXES, one is the more ſurprized, that HYDASPES, who has all along through the courſe of theſe letters ſupported the character of a very rational kind of man, ſhould have impoſed the fatal neceſſity upon himſelf. Note by the Tranſlator.

* For the Perſic dance ſee XENOPH. 6th book of the expedition of the younger CYRUS, where he thus deſcribes it, τέλος δὲ τὸ Περσικὸν ὠρχήσατο κρότων τὰς πέλτας, καὶ ὤκλασι καὶ ἀνίστατο.

is the only conſiderable one you will find throughout the life of that excellent ſatrap. And indeed it is my opinion, that the hurry and fatigue he underwent in performing the ceremonials of his office, upon this grand occaſion, contributed more, than the royal wine, to the cauſe of his untimely death.

Very incapable am I of doing juſtice to his character, for few there are, who ſtand in ſo amiable a light. None have I known more largely poſſeſſed of all thoſe ſocial virtues, which claim an univerſal eſteem. None have I known ſo unenvied in his greatneſs, becauſe ſuch was the uſe he made of his intereſt with his ſovereign, that no body had cauſe to wiſh it leſs. A ſtranger to the low arts of flattery, he diſdained to recommend himſelf to the favour of his prince by any of thoſe indirect methods, or baſe inſinuations, which are too often the practice of a court. He never profeſſed friendſhip, where he was not cordially ſincere, much leſs to any perſon, whom he would ſecretly have betrayed. Nor did he ever expreſs a zeal in any cauſe, to which he was not by honour and principle moſt firmly attached. In this addreſs and behaviour he ſhewed a becoming eaſe, a manly gracefulneſs; nothing effeminate, nothing fantaſtical. Gay without levity, and polite without affectation, he was perfectly skilled in the minuteſt exactneſſes, and all the moſt circumſtantial forms of a court; yet without looking upon thoſe things as of any conſideration, abſtracted from their place and time. The benevolence of his diſpoſition involuntarily ſhewed itſelf in that perpetual ſerenity of temper, and natural chearfulneſs, which could only flow from a good mind.

Sure,

Sure, CLEANDER, ſuch a man does an honour to his nation, while he ſhines among the principal ornaments of the court. Ambaſſadors of foreign ſtates, by being introduced by him to the royal preſence, received a more heightened idea of the Perſian grandeur and politeneſs, than from all that dazzling ſhow, which ſurrounds our monarch's throne. By an happy addreſs, an agreeable condeſcenſion, and engaging affability, he had the art to reconcile ſtrangers to our cuſtoms, however different from their own. To thee, who haſt converſed and correſponded with him, I need not mention the elegancy, with which he entertained his friends. Poſſeſſed with theſe virtues and accompliſhments, he died lamented by his royal maſter, lamented by all, who knew his worth. For my own part, ſo highly do I prize the reputation of his friendſhip, that if my name ſhall chance to go down to poſterity, I deſire no other memorial to remain of me than this, that INTAPHERNES once lived the friend of HYDASPES.

L.

LETTER CLXXII.

CLEANDER to HYLLUS.

MY brother has had, I find, a regard to the ſatraps recommendation; he has paid the price demanded for thee, and placed thee in my Tmolian villa. It will become thee, by thy diligence and fidelity, to ſhew, thou haſt deſerved this advancement, from a laborious employment in the old gardens of CROESUS, to the command over the peaſants of three villages, and

the care of thoſe works, which will be the delight of thy maſter.

Ever ſince the paſſing of the king's grant to me, the inhabitants, no longer in fear of the royal collectors, have been remiſs in bringing in the accuſtomed portion of their produce. This thou art by no means to allow; and if any neglect thy ſummons, let them know, that the governor of Sardis is ready at any time to ſupply thee with a number of ſoldiers, to be quartered at thy diſcretion upon the defaulters, till ſatisfaction is made. There is another irregularity, which gives me more uneaſineſs; the laſt ſeaſon of the gold-fiſhery, juſt before the tents were pitched for the officers of the treaſury, ſome from the neighbouring farms were ſeen at work in the river *. Uſe all poſſible means to diſcover theſe offenders; thou knoweſt the ſeverity of the laws; and let the officers in their next journey find them impaled upon the ſpot. What an unworthy return to my gracious lord, to ſuffer his revenue to be pillaged upon the very lands, which I owe to his bounty!

When TELEPHANES arrives, ſee, that he be entertained, as becomes my friend. He will give orders for ſeveral alterations in the villa, and lay the foundation of a fire-temple: let him be ſupplied with ſuch materials and workmen, as he demands. The quarry on the other ſide the mountain will furniſh ſtone; for I will not

* The Pactolus. CLEANDER's villa ſeems to have been ſituate upon this river, near the foot of mount Tmolus, famous for its ſaffron.

have

have the tomb* of ALYATTES any more defaced. On the contrary, I intend that venerable monument ſhall be reſtored: TELEPHANES will make good the baſe, and the five rude pyramids, with the inſcriptions; and thou muſt plant a large circular grove of beech in the middle, and clumps of pines at proper diſtances all round it. A double avenue of plane-trees muſt join the houſe to the temple; and the banks of Gyges's lake are to be repaired, and all the variety of trees, that the ſoil will bear, encouraged to grow upon them. The marble buſts of the King, MEGABYZUS, and GOBRYAS, are deſigned for the ſummer-portico, which looks toward the north. The ſtatues and vaſes TELEPHANES will diſpoſe amongſt the plantations.

There will be ſent from Epheſus twelve Spartan dogs: the Helot, who brings them, is to feed and train them: ſuch proviſions and conveniences, as he wants, muſt be allowed him. Prepare a ſtrong incloſure by the river-ſide for the horſes of the old Perſian race, out of the royal-ſtud in Niſæa; and another for the camels, and the aſſes for ſtallions, which ORSAMES promiſed me from Arabia. Thou wilt alſo receive from that lord ſome Scythian bows and hunting-ſpears of Damaſcus: let them be carefully laid up. Send back by

* HERODOTUS calls this a prodigious work, inferior only to thoſe in Ægypt and Babylon. It was a mound of earth raiſed upon a baſement of huge ſtones; and ſeems to have been a circle of 1300 feet diameter. Thoſe rude pyramids were intire in the hiſtorian's time. Near this monument was the lake of Gyges.

his meſſengers ten meaſures of ſaffron, and take care it be of the fineſt growth of the mountain.

Truſty HYLLUS, I envy thee the buſineſs, I now charge thee with. I long to be employed myſelf among my buildings and plantations. Fear not however to loſe thy office: preſerve the character, that is given of thee; and thy maſter, when he comes, will be only thy fellow-labourer.

W.

LETTER CLXXIII.

CLEANDER to TERIBAZUS.

THE regular remittances thou haſt made to me for a conſiderable time paſt, noble ſatrap, would ſcarce have claimed my particular acknowledgments, without the honour of thy letter, which has added the grace of private friendſhip to what might otherwiſe have ſeemed an ordinary effect of thy care in the execution of a public truſt. I foreſaw and regretted long ſince, that the ill deſigns of TIMOCLES the Eubœan would not be limited by the exerciſe of his unwearied malice againſt me, but would end in the baſeſt ingratitude to his maſter. The loſs of twenty talents out of thy coffers, and the villain's flight, are ſufficient to convince thee of it; and, like a generous enemy, thou art not aſhamed to deſcend from thy dignity to do an act of juſtice to the meaneſt of the ſlaves of ARTAXERXES. The promiſe thou haſt given me of protection relieves me from the apprehenſion of court-artifices; and I ſhall enjoy my fields of ſaffron, and the ſprings

at

at the foot of Tmolus, in ſecurity, while I know, that my conduct is approved by every miniſter in the king's palace. There is ſomething too in the reconciliation of a potent adverſary, that flatters our vanity more than the continued affection of a friend: the one is often the effect of long acquaintance, prejudice, and habitual partiality; the other, even againſt prejudice, ſeems founded on the matureſt reſult of conviction. I cannot perſuade myſelf, that the greatneſs of thy mind, or the lowneſs of my condition, could ſuffer thee to make any advances towards me, but on the moſt honourable motives.

Thou art deſirous to know, how far I have been led by my enquiries into that, which is the peculiar object of thy attention; the ſources of wealth in this country, and its revenues. The Athenians value themſelves on the veins of marble, which they have kept open for many years in the mountain Hymettus: they adorn their city with it at an eaſy rate, and furniſh it to the reſt of Greece, and ſome parts of the leſſer Aſia. But what has proved of the moſt ſignal advantage, both for enriching the ſtate and individuals, is the poſſeſſion of ſilver mines at Laurium between the Piræeus and cape Sunium. Theſe are truly inexhauſtible; and though they ſometimes complain of being overſtocked with labourers for the tillage of their lands, yet here is perpetual employment; they even allow ſtrangers to ſearch for them, if they will be at the expence of raiſing works. Silver being conſidered as the ſtandard of commerce, they know, that the more they have of it, the greater will be the quantity annually exported by their

merchants, and in return the commodities of all other countries are brought home to them; ſo that the public revenues are advantaged in two different ways by theſe works; firſt, by the aſſeſſment on the oar, as it comes out of the mine, and then by a cuſtom levied on thoſe goods, which are imported in exchange for it. Indeed it is not long, that they have made uſe of this benefit beſtowed on them by nature for the ſervices of the ſtate; ſince before the time of THEMISTOCLES no tax was laid upon the digging of oar; but he propoſed the erecting that fund, for the ſupport of the war againſt the people of Ægina.

As there is a pretty general complaint for the want of miners, I cannot avoid digreſſing a little in this place to open to thee a favourite project of ſome perſons; which is, that a large number of ſlaves ſhould be purchaſed by the commonwealth, to be let out to thoſe, who have mines. A mark may be ſet on their habits, to diſtinguiſh them from ſuch as are the property of private men, and a certain price paid into the treaſury for the hire of them. Theſe ſlaves, if properly trained, might be uſeful in time of war, either for the fleet or ſoldiery: they would always be a good defence of the fortreſſes at Anaphlyſium and Thoricus, which cover the mines to the ſouth, and to the north, about the diſtance of ſixty ſtadia from each other: and if another caſtle were built between both, as a place of general rendezvous in time of danger, the ſilver mines might be protected better in any future invaſions of their territory. This caſtle would be ſituated 500 ſtadia from Megara, 600 from Thebes; ſo that ſhould an enemy

march

march either of thoſe ways, he muſt paſs by Athens. It is very probable therefore, that no ſufficient force could be ſent to diſturb, much leſs to poſſeſs and uſe them. Beſides all this, if better encouragement were given to ſtrangers to ſettle in Attica, by releaſing them from the very hazardous and diſagreeable employment of ſerving in their ſhips and armies; by allotting, as a free gift to thoſe, who would build houſes in Athens, the waſte ground in ſeveral quarters of the city; or by inviting them to ſettle near the mines in the country, and raiſe a large town there; great eſtates would be made, the country would grow more populous, and the public more wealthy. But the ſuperſtitious regard, in which the name of THESEUS is held by the Athenians, and a falſe maxim of policy, makes them adhere to what he did for them. He very wiſely incorporated the twelve cities of Cecrops, when the ſtate was in its infancy, that their united efforts might tend under one ſcheme of government to the common good. Now, it ſeems, they are determined to raiſe no more cities in Attica, leſt the ſtrength of Athens be diverted, and its greatneſs injured; and they rather chuſe, when crouded with too many inhabitants, to ſend out colonies (as they did lately to Thurium) for the improvement of other countries, than to increaſe the inhabitants and buildings on their own ſoil.

I return to the revenues: The whole amount of their yearly value is 2000 talents; a conſiderable part of which is raiſed not only by the ſilver mines, and the cuſtoms of the Piræeus, but by the loppings of the groves on the banks of the Iliſſus, and the woods on the

the ſide of ſome of their hills. Another part ariſes from the duties laid on the profeſſion of particular trades and arts, and on ſtrangers and freed ſlaves. The judicial fines and amercements bring in a large ſum to the ſtate, where the free and ſtubborn temper of the people ſo greatly inclines them to litigiouſneſs. A tenth of theſe is ſet aſide for MINERVA, a fiftieth for the other Gods, and the reſt is carried into the treaſury. But the annual payments exacted of the tributary cities are the ſureſt ſupport of the public ſervice. They were originally levied under the alarm of general danger to all Greece, when it was over-run by XERXES, and continued afterwards as contributions to enable them to make head againſt Perſia, if a ſecond invaſion ſhould ever be deſigned or attempted. ARISTIDES firſt collected them, and raiſed 460 talents. PERICLES added near a third, ſo as to encreaſe them to 600. CLEON (as furious a declaimer as he was againſt the burdenſom taxes in the laſt adminiſtration) has enlarged them to 800. And the fondneſs of the people for theatrical entertainments, the erecting temples and ſtatues, joined to the growing charges of the war, will probably carry them much higher. Notwithſtanding the number of courts and judges, before whom all proceedings are brought in a legal way, 150 talents ſuffice to defray their appointments; and yet by the corruption of thoſe, who are at the head of affairs, theſe revenues are every year expended by the commonwealth.

The preſident of the proedroi has the keys of the treaſury; but as that preſidentſhip laſts only for a day, he is not allowed to keep them longer; and no man is entruſted with

with them a ſecond time. He takes no part in diſpoſing the revenue, which is aſſigned to the care of the principal treaſurer, and the comptroller of his accounts, who both wear gold rings as the badges of their dignity.

The citadel is the only place, where the wealth of the ſtate is lodged. How diſproportionate is this to the magnificence of the Perſian empire! where, thou well knoweſt, the four cities of Suſa, Perſepolis, Paſargada, and Damaſcus, can ſcarce contain the ſhining heaps of ſilks, jewels, ſilver and gold, which adorn the court of our monarch, raiſe armies, equip fleets, and create the awe and the affection of thoſe millions, who either fear his power, or feel his liberality. Yet whence is it, that the little and comparatively poor ſtate of Attica becomes even formidable to Aſia? Can it be for any other reaſon, great miniſter, than that ſuperfluity depreſſes the mind as much as poverty?

I will not enter into a detail of the officers in the revenue. Theſe ſwarm in every corner of Athens, and the cauſe of it is obvious. In a government like this, the miniſters, who would attach men to their ſervice, muſt have a variety of employments in their power. It is very eaſy to find out a plauſible pretext for making a new officer in the management of the public money, when it is not ſo in any other part of the conſtitution; the conſequence of which is, that the claims of dependents occaſion gradual additions of this nature, which the intereſt of the public is at no time powerful enough to cancel.

The taxes raiſed in different ways by the commonwealth are paid in current money of gold and ſilver.

Not

Not ſo is it in Perſia. Our coin as yet is not ſufficiently ſettled, nor divided into various ſhapes of leſſer value for the ſervices of life among the vulgar. Some attempts have been made towards it: DARIUS gained immortal honour by the gold pieces, which bear his name. ARYANDES by his ſilver drachm even raiſed the envy of his maſter, who, in a manner very inconſiſtent with his uſual benignity and good ſenſe, took away the life of the ſatrap, to ſatisfy that thirſt of revenge, which his vanity had provoked. It is thy part to imitate and improve on theſe great models: ARTAXERXES can think nothing, which adds to the glory and felicity of his reign, whatever be the hand producing it, a diminution of his perſonal merit.

There is ſomething however in the way of collecting the great king's revenues, which are paid in kind, that has more an air of equity and grandeur, than the practice of the Athenians. Every country lays a portion of thoſe commodities, for which it is diſtinguiſhed, on the ſteps of his throne. The ſatrapy of Armenia ſends 20,000 young horſes annually to the ſtud at Niſæa; Ægypt, immenſe quantities of corn; Lydia, a thouſand bars and ingots of gold. The queen's veil, girdle, and mantle, are the honourable names of three wealthy cities; the bread, wine, and wearing apparel of THEMISTOCLES, are to this day the appellations of others; and while thoſe cities ſtand, they will be laſting monuments of the royal munificence.

One cannot but obſerve further, that this way of collecting is very little expoſed to the hazard of embezzlements. The tributes of the empire are too unwieldy

wieldy for the purpoſes of knavery; whereas in Athens, the pecuniary payments may now and then be ſecreted or leſſened without fear of a diſcovery, and afford ſtrong temptations to the avarice and diſhoneſty of an officer. Yet I know not how it is, TERIBAZUS, ſuch is the increaſing, and at the ſame time the baſhful nature of corruption, that the proſtitute riſe daily in their demands; but, unleſs it can aſſume a more convenient form than the cumbrous one of talents, muſt lye under difficulties in tranſacting with thoſe, who are diſpoſed to gratify them. The little dealings of that ſort, to which the neceſſity of the king's ſervice has obliged me, were attended with aukward circumſtances; and if the ſum was conſiderable, great caution required in the conveyance of it. I make no doubt, but the wiſdom of poſterity will introduce new refinements into this ſubject; or elſe vice, out of mere concern for its own intereſts, muſt ſtop ſhort in its career, and the kingdom of AHRIMAN be deſtroyed, before the ſeaſon appointed in the book of deſtiny.

C.

LETTER CLXXIV.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

IT is probable, thou haſt already received advice, that ARTAPHERNES has been detained at Eione by the Athenian collector of the tribute in thoſe parts; and therefore the news of his arrival at Athens will not ſurprize thee, ſo much as it did myſelf, who was ignorant of what had befallen him in his paſſage through Thrace.

Judge

Judge of my aſtoniſhment, potent Lord, when going down yeſterday morning to the Piræeus, I was told by a friend, whom I met with in the way, that a Perſian ſatrap of diſtinguiſhing quality was juſt arrived on board an Athenian galley. "What, returned I haſtily, hath ARTAXERXES ſent a public miniſter hither? Surely it muſt be a commiſſion of ſingular importance, which could require ſo much ſecrecy, as that a more formal notification of the embaſſy ſhould not be firſt given." My friend was unable to give me any further light into the matter; and we continued our walk to the port, but in the way fell in with a great multitude of people, in the midſt of whom a band of ſoldiers, with the archon POLEMARCH at their head, were conducting an old man of a grave aſpect, and majeſtic appearance, to the Prytaneum. I had the curioſity to preſs as near this venerable ſtranger as I could, and was amazed beyond meaſure to diſcern, in his countenance, all the features of my old patron and friend ARTAPHERNES. I haſtened out of the croud, that no body might obſerve the concern I was under; and impatient to have my doubts cleared up, went inſtantly to CLEON's houſe, but was ſome time, before I could ſee him, becauſe ſeveral of the magiſtrates and ruling members of the aſſembly were that morning in cloſe conſultation with him. As ſoon as they were departed, he came to me, and prevented what I was going to ſay, by telling me, that an accident had happened, which, though it might ſeem to prognoſticate a rupture with Perſia, and appear inconſiſtent with the reſpect, which the republic had always profeſſed for the great king,

might

might yet, he hoped, by prudence and temper on both ſides, be ſo managed, as to produce a perfect good underſtanding, and a cloſer friendſhip betwixt them. He then proceeded to acquaint me, "that ARISTIDES, (grandſon of the great ARISTIDES,) the collector of the tribute at Eione, having ſtrong reaſons to imagine, that a Perſian ſatrap travelling through his juriſdiction was ſent to negotiate with the enemies of this ſtate, had ventured, without any orders from the people, to ſtop both him and his retinue; and being on his departure out of the country, had brought them in his ſquadron to Athens. That he had likewiſe inſpected the papers of this embaſſador, which entirely confirmed his ſuſpicions; for amongſt them he found a letter from ARTAXERXES to the Lacedæmonians, empowering the bearer of it, to make propoſitions in his name, and receive their's in return, and inſtructions to enter into a treaty with the Spartan republic on conditions therein ſpecified." "This conduct of your court, added CLEON, is the ſtrongeſt juſtification of our commiſſioners proceedings; for if they may be thought irregular, and a violation of the law of nations, ſurely the part Perſia has taken to amuſe us with overtures, in order to ſell her alliance dearer to the Lacedæmonians, cannot deſerve a much gentler name; and one extraordinary ſtep may ſerve to excuſe the other." He concluded, however, by aſſuring me, that "ſuch were the real diſpoſitions of his countrymen to prefer the friendſhip of Perſia to all other conſiderations, and ſuch his own deſire to acknowledge the favours he had received from the king, that the magiſtrates would give orders for the

entertainment of ARTAPHERNES in a manner ſuitable to his rank, and the dignity of the prince he repreſented; and it was likewiſe reſolved to call an aſſembly in a few days, wherein he intended to move the nominating a ſolemn embaſſy to the court of Suſa; and that ARTAPHERNES ſhould be deſired to accompany thoſe, who were choſen for the employment. In the mean time, he ſaid, we might in private conferences bring the project (mentioned in my former letters) to ſome maturity, and conſequently ripen and prepare things for a more public negotiation."

I heard him to the end of his diſcourſe without interruption, and then replied briefly, that "as I had no orders from the king on this unexpected event, I could only ſpeak my own ſenſe of the matter, which was, that ſo notorious a breach of the law of nations, as ſtopping the perſon of a public miniſter, and examining his papers, could no otherwiſe be repaired or ſoftened, than by a ſevere and ſpeedy puniſhment inflicted on ARISTIDES, and an open diſavowal of his behaviour: that I wondered to hear him aim at juſtifying the ſeizure of ARTAPHERNES from his being ſent to the Lacedæmonians, as if the war between them and the Athenians deprived the king of his liberty to tranſact buſineſs with either of the parties by his ambaſſadors, who had an indiſputable right to a free paſſage over the dominions of every ſtate, with whom their maſter maintained a friendſhip, and were not to be ſtopped upon baſe ſurmiſes." I obſerved alſo, that "he himſelf tacitly ſuppoſed the injuſtice of the action conſidered apart, by putting it as a retaliation for the inſincerity of the

the Perſian court in their dealings with Athens. But I little expected to hear reproaches of that nature come from one, towards whom the king had expreſſed ſo ſingular a confidence, and given already ſeveral proofs of his regard. And as to the papers, upon which he laid ſuch ſtreſs, I ventured to affirm, that, upon a more accurate conſideration of them, nothing elſe would appear, than that ARTAXERXES, like a prince careful of his own intereſt, and that of his ſubjects, was determined, that thoſe ſhould reap the advantages of his alliance, who ſhewed moſt readineſs in acknowledging his juſt claims, and proved their title to his protection by the goodneſs of their cauſe. In reſpect to the laſt point, viz. the continuing our conferences, I remembered thy orders, that I ſhould not be over-forward in bringing matters to an iſſue; and therefore contented myſelf with alledging the propriety of deferring them, till we heard in what manner the king received the news of ARTAPHERNES's journey being ſtopped, leſt we ſhould ſpend time to no purpoſe, if violent meaſures on the part of Perſia were the conſequences of it.

This is the ſubſtance, potent Lord, of my converſation with CLEON, who embraced me at parting, and ſaid, "Do no ill office, CLEANDER, and, I will anſwer for it, this affair will be amicably adjuſted." I replied, "I ſhould do my duty by giving a faithful account of what paſſed on this occaſion, but that the king, whom I had the honour to ſerve, was too wiſe a prince, to want any ſuggeſtions from me, by which to regulate his affairs."

I have ſince found means to procure a private admittance to ARTAPHERNES, who is lodged in the Prytaneum, and entertained in a more ſplendid and honourable manner, than the miniſters from any foreign ſtate, whom I ever ſaw here. I refer thee to his letters, which he diſpatches this night by an Aſtanda, for the particulars of his being ſeized at Eione, and of his uſage and reception ſince his arrival in this city. He has likewiſe taken it upon himſelf to apprize thee of the reaſons, which have induced him to come to a reſolution, not to refuſe accompanying the embaſſadors (if the people ſhall appoint any) to the Perſian court.

Thou wilt no doubt be curious to know, if ARISTIDES was really inſtructed by his maſters to ſecure ARTAPHERNES in his paſſage; or whether, (as CLEON proteſted to me more than once) he acted by his own authority, and did not acquaint the magiſtrates here with what he had done, till he entered the Piræeus with his priſoners.

I have made the moſt diligent enquiry imaginable into this point. Our refiners in politics entertain themſelves and their hearers with ſeveral ſpeculations upon it, equally various and uncertain. Some affirm, that ARISTIDES was inſtigated to commit ſo bold an action, by a private letter from CLEON, and two or three of his principal friends: others, with as much confidence, are extremely eager to whiſper in one's ear, that it is all a contrivance of NICIAS, to induce his countrymen to clap up a peace with Sparta, after having offered ſo ſenſible an affront to the court of Perſia. But I have ſufficient grounds to believe, that this extraordinary

nary behaviour of ARISTIDES takes its riſe entirely from the natural temper of the man, who is rough, enterprizing, and inconſiderate, deſirous at any rate to puſh himſelf forward, and filled with an hereditary abhorrence for Perſia and the great king, which he carries to a ridiculous pitch.

From what I can collect of the diſpoſition, which the people at preſent are in, they will not make the leaſt ſcruple to diſown their commiſſioner; but any motion for puniſhment is not likely to prevail, becauſe it will be thought hard to give up an officer for a fault, which was occaſioned by the exceſs of his zeal (though a miſtaken one) for the public ſervice. But I comfort myſelf with the thoughts, that the ſolemn embaſſy, which the Athenians are preparing, will come charged with ſubmiſſions for what is paſt, and with conceſſions of the higheſt importance to the future intereſt of Perſia. I am bold to ſay this, becauſe it is wonderful to obſerve, how ſtrong a turn the affections of the people have taken in our favour, and with how much rapture they extol the wiſe government of ARTAXERXES, and the felicity of his reign. It is improbable, that the Lacedæmonians will yield to their rivals in the conteſt, for an ally, who can add a caſting weight to the balance of Greece; and thus will our monarch, the light and glory of the eaſt, enjoy a diſtinction unknown to the moſt renowned of his anceſtors, of ſeeing the chief nations in the weſt proſtrate themſelves by turns, for protection, at the foot of his reſplendent throne.

From Athens the 14th of Pyanepſion.

P.

LETTER CLXXV.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

I Have long imagined, noble GOBRYAS, that the accounts, which I ſometimes ſend thee of debates in the Athenian aſſembly, muſt be peculiarly agreeable to thee, as they tend to open the nature and genius of popular councils, and the different colours, in which the ſame point may be ſhewn by the wit, the zeal, and the jealouſy of contending parties.

Yeſterday CLEON, as *principal treaſurer, preſented to the people a ſcheme of the expences for the next year. They amounted to near two thirds of their annual revenues, which he propoſed to lay out in equipping 60 gallies, 2000 foot, and 300 horſe, for a ſecret expedition. This propoſition occaſioned a long and remarkable debate, in which the chiefs on both ſides were careful to diſtinguiſh themſelves. The adventrous miniſter, who moved it, opened the nature and reaſons of it in a long and elaborate harangue. He declared, "that the opinion he was now going to offer was a natural conſequence of his averſion to a peace, which muſt neceſſarily have been broken, when Sparta had recovered its ſtrength, and found means to create an opportunity of renewing the war: that the only way to reſtore Athens to its original dominion over Greece, was to attack their enemies in the moſt ſenſible parts. He did not know, whether it was right to intimate too

* Επιμελητὴς τῶν κοινῶν πρσόδων, or ταμίας τῆς διοικήσεως.

ſtrongly

ſtrongly what he had projected for a plan of military operation, in the words of the queſtion; but he believed, that every one might underſtand, where lay the moſt ſenſible parts of the poſſeſſions of Lacedæmon. He ſaid the iſland of Cythera was the wall and the citadel of Sparta; that there had not been that attention to ſecure it, which might have been expected from the importance of its ſituation; and he could not think it either impracticable or romantic to attempt it: that many had thought the attack upon Corinth laſt year a very wild ſcheme, yet it had been attended with ſome degree of ſucceſs: that many more had thought the deſcent upon Sphacteria abſurd to the degree of being ridiculous, yet the Gods had proſpered them: that he ſaw no colour of argument, why they ſhould be ſo far wanting to themſelves, to the genius of their ſtate, and to the propitious Deities, whom they worſhip, as to neglect an occaſion of endeavouring to compaſs what they might long in vain have wiſhed for; that now the occaſion had preſented itſelf, it appeared to be deciſive, and the deſign more probably fortunate, than the expeditions juſt mentioned before they proved ſo in event: that let others ſay what they would of his meaſures, and miſcall them raſh, he muſt remind them, that the courage of a wiſe man does not ariſe ſo much from ſpirit, as from knowledge. "Athenians, concluded he, I am not one of the turn of mind with ſome, who might be named to you, who, when the affairs of our adverſaries are in a flouriſhing condition, walk up and down with a more than ordinary chearfulneſs in the forum, giving their hand to ſuch as will be pleaſed with the

news, and make a fair report of them to others, who mean the ruin of our ſtate. Nor when your counſels are proſperous, do I fix my eyes upon the ground, and ſigh, becauſe it flatters the opinion of the men I hate, and out of very grief for your ſecurity; but as I mean to exerciſe my reaſon, ſo I intereſt my paſſions and all my powers in your ſervice." He was ſeconded by LYSICLES and EUCRATES, two of his inſtruments, one of them * pay-maſter of the forces, the other † comptroller of the public accounts.

The ſpeech of CLEON made a good impreſſion, and was eſteemed an artful and notable performance. DIODOTUS roſe up to anſwer him. He ſet out with profeſſing, " that he was not in the leaſt ſurprized with the reaſonings of that day: he thought thoſe, who had appeared with ſo much zeal in oppoſition to the Spartan commiſſioners, acted very conſiſtently in propoſing this meaſure for their aſſent: that he had all along differed from CLEON in opinion; and for his own part he durſt as heartily oppoſe it, as others more ſanguine dare advance it; for every ſtep, which carried them from the proſpect of peace, carried them further from the true intereſt of Athens. He ſaid, it would be abſurd to particularize the evils of war, before thoſe, who felt them; and the rather, as an inexperience of them leads no man into it, and the ſevereſt ſenſe of them diverts no man from it, while he ſuffers inclination to contrive his enterprizes, and hope to ſuggeſt the iſſue of them. That the effects of peace, in favour of that ſtate, after former

* Ταμίας τῶν στρατιωτικῶν. † Ἀντιγραφεὺς τῆς διοικήσεως.

difficulties,

difficulties, ſhould have induced them at leaſt to give its advocates a fair hearing; that after the retreat of the Perſians, they had for many years attended to the cultivation of commerce, to the ſplendor of their temples, and religious ceremonies; to the increaſe of their wealth, and quiet eſtabliſhment of their power: that the thing, which had moſt contributed to the preſervation of their own and the common liberty at that juncture, was their moderation towards Sparta; that the wiſdom, which they then ſhewed in deferring the command to that ſtate, when it was fooliſhly and petulantly inſiſted on, had been the great ſource of their ſubſequent authority; and an imitation of that wiſdom ſeemed the proper means of continuing it. That their expences are very burdenſom: the poll-tax had been raiſed more than once ſince the beginning of the war, (a circumſtance extremely unuſual;) and though the public can ſupport the calamities of a few private men, yet no private man can long ſupport the calamities of the public: that they were already ſo far exhauſted, as that in many years they could not be reſtored again to a ſufficient balance for Perſia: that it was neither the intereſt of Greece, nor of the great king, to ſee Lacedæmon, or indeed either of the contending cities, deſtroyed; becauſe the former might ſuſpect the conqueror would tyrannize over the leſſer ſtates; and the latter would know, that in ſuch caſe the united ſtrength of Greece might be brought to act uniformly againſt him under one head. So that the end propoſed to theſe meaſures of entirely reducing Sparta appeared wholly unattainable; the means too impracticable; for though there was ſomething plauſible

in the thought of attacking Cythera, yet it muſt prove very difficult in the execution; that the Spartans would certainly draw down their whole force to its defence, as ſoon as they hear of the deſign, and would be particularly ſtudious of retrieving any credit they had loſt in Sphacteria. As to the eſtimates, he thought them extravagant, and not made without a view to the perſonal benefit of ſuch citizens, as have the management of the public coffers." "In concluſion, added he, to thoſe, who eagerly wiſh the continuance of war, I deſire leave to ſay, that it is not difficult, when advice is neceſſary, to aſſume an air of courage, nor when danger approaches, to repreſent its terrors; but this is as difficult as it is becoming, in danger to ſhew courage, and in council prudence."

The turns in popular aſſemblies are ſo quick, that the ſpeech I have juſt recited, accompanied with great energy and pathos both of action and expreſſion, ſeemed to have an effect upon the people, which was only to be taken off by EPIGENES, an orator of great eloquence and parts. He ſaid, "he had flattered himſelf with hopes on the former queſtion concerning the propoſitions of the Spartan commiſſioners, that thoſe, who were for rejecting them, would have had the concurrence of the men, who entered into the war with eagerneſs, and admired the conduct of PERICLES: that he remembred the time, when that party held a very different language, and in a ſeaſon of general diſtreſs, againſt the general opinion, oppoſed ſending embaſſadors to the Lacedæmonians, or receiving any from them: that ſince the ſupport they had given to the commiſſioners, it was in

no

no ſort aſtoniſhing they ſhould diſapprove the motion now made; but their conduct was a ſtrong proof of unadviſed levity; all for war and vigour to day, peace and moderation to morrow. That it is no argument againſt the fitneſs of political meaſures to ſay they are attended with hazard; every meaſure of government, eſpecially in war, is expoſed to it; and provided the end be right, and the means not improbable, you ought to be at an expence in maintaining them: that while the Athenians intend to be the firſt people of Greece in trade, they muſt endeavour to be the firſt in power: that their naval force would decay, if they did not aſſert their authority on the continent of Greece and Aſia." "Where, exclaimed he, will be the vent for your merchandizes? Where the tribute and obedience of the iſlands? What friend will truſt you? What enemy will fear you?" That the beſt way to maintain that authority, was to purſue the beginnings of their ſucceſs, and to do otherwiſe would be prepoſterous. That to ſay nothing of their intereſt, they were bound in honour to this conduct. The late cruel uſage of Platæa, an ancient ally of this city, as well as the injuries and violence, that produced the war on their part, ſhewed how little the Spartans regarded juſtice or humanity: that no puniſhment was too great for them, and the Gods are preparing to inflict it by the hand of Athens. That as to what is ſaid of being reſtored as a balance to Perſia, there is no weight in it; they were at no time a balance for Perſia, ſcarcely even at the head of the confederacy: but the deſpair of being ſo great as they could wiſh, is no reaſon, why they ſhould not aim to be as great

great as they can. That as the intereſt of all ſtates muſt vary according to their engagements and exigencies in different periods of time, ſo the intereſt of Athens muſt vary; and he was not without good hopes of the affection and alliance of the great king; and if they could ſecure his friendſhip, the reaſonings about the politics of the ſublime court muſt fall to the ground. He declared he would not enter into the particular eſtimates at preſent; he believed they were well conſidered; but that was a meaner conſideration, and the fitneſs of the general meaſure ſhould not be overlooked on their account. That it was highly neceſſary the queſtion propoſed by CLEON ſhould be carried by a very great majority, if they meant to give ſpirit to their allies, to ſtrike a terror into Sparta, and to gain that revenge, which the juſtice of their cauſe, as well as the proſperity of their arms, preſaged for them."

ALCIBIADES roſe next after EPIGENES, and convinced the people that day, he will be one of the fineſt ſpeakers they ever have heard in their aſſembly. He opened with ſaying, " that he had very ſeldom troubled them with his thoughts upon any ſubject; and though he had ſome things to offer of moment to the preſent queſtion, yet he believed, that even the preparation he had made for delivering his ſentiments before them, could hardly have induced him to get the better of that reſerve and modeſty, which he thought became him, if he had not been drawn up out of a regard to truth, and the memory of his uncle PERICLES. That the friends of this great man had acted a wiſe and conſiſtent part, ſuch as would have been approved and followed by himſelf:

ſelf: that when PERICLES was againſt ſending embaſſadors to treat of peace with Lacedæmon, it ought to be remembered, the city was diſtreſſed by the plague, and by the deſolation of Attica: the terms they could then have gained, muſt have been attended with diſgrace. That great man knew, at the ſame time, that the ſtate had ſtrength to ſupport itſelf, till a turn of fortune ſhould happen in it's favour; then would be the proper ſeaſon either to make or accept overtures of peace, and that ſeaſon in his apprehenſion was the preſent. That thoſe alone are to be charged with inconſiſtency, who were for negotiating a treaty in adverſity, when it would have been to yield to their enemies, and not at preſent on the terms of conqueſt, when it is intreated at their own doors; who are for continuing the war in proſperity, which will be to leave things again to chance, that their valour had reduced to certainty: he could ſee nothing conſiſtent in this, except an uniform plan of oppoſition to the public good. That if the Athenians behaved on this occaſion with that inſolence, which is but a too natural as well as fatal conſequence of victory, we might depend upon it, that on the firſt change the Greeks would defer the generalſhip and authority to ſome other city: that the jealouſy PERDICCAS had of them was no ſecret, nor how aſſiduous the Lacedæmonians are in exciting a diſaffection in Thrace; and if that republic could receive no ſatisfaction as to the peace, ſo earneſtly deſired, it would exert its laſt efforts in attacking Eione and Amphipolis: that ſhould the propoſition now made be attended to, Athens would become engaged in a war of acquiſition,

tion, and not of defence: that this would be to alienate juſtice from their ſide, as well as to affront fortune. That as to what is concluded from the ſucceſs at Sphacteria to the event of the project propoſed, he laid no weight upon it: he ſtill thought that expedition precipitate and raſh; that every man, who has taken reaſonable meaſures, has always the ſatisfaction of having done his part, even when thoſe meaſures are defeated; but if he, who undertakes an imprudent enterprize, ſhould chance to proſper, he indeed accompliſhes his deſign, and yet deſerves no leſs blame, than if he had failed of ſucceſs. That the deluſion, which prevailed among his countrymen, was amazing. "When it was moved to proſecute the war with vigour ſome years ago, and to ſtruggle with adverſity, what was the anſwer? The plague exhauſts our people; the expence exhauſts our treaſure: a bad peace is better than none. When it is now moved to make terms with advantage in proſperity, what is the cry?" The fate of the Platæans: the pride of Sparta: the dominion of all Greece." That if they perſevered in liſtening to the advice of that man, who ſeemed to have ſuch extraordinary influence over them, the effects muſt be very ruinous; and he believed, that without procuring the ſanction of an oracle (which ſome were fond of) to his opinion, he might venture to recommend the ſentiment of * HESIOD as oracular, who ſays, "that the welfare of the ſtate often ſuffers for the counſels, and the crimes of one bad citizen."

* HES. Ἔργ. καὶ Ἡμερῶν ά. V. 238.

The

The friends of ALCIBIADES received this ſpeech with the higheſt applauſe. It put them in mind of the thunder of PERICLES; but there are, who pretend to judge already, that his way of acting will never be equal to his eloquence. What ſurprized me in his manner of ſpeaking, was the extreme deliberation of it, and the command, which ſo young a man diſcovered of himſelf. Though no one has a better invention, or more flowing diction, yet if the propereſt argument or phraſe did not immediately occur to him, he would pauſe and heſitate till they did. He would repeat his laſt words over again, while he was thinking forward, and the produce always made amends for the delay. CLEON and EPIGENES however prevailed. The eſtimates were allowed, and the project on Cythera is to be executed. It was expected, that NICIAS would have taken a part in this debate; but it ſeems he told his party, that ſince the aſſembly would not hearken to peace, he ſhould not oppoſe any probable ſcheme that might carry on the war. Others ſuggeſt, that he is to be general in the expedition, and being deſirous of that ſervice, would not vote againſt it. It is very difficult to determine on the hidden motives, which give riſe to the conduct of any man; but the laſt conſideration ſeems too trifling to determine NICIAS, and the firſt is agreeable to the ſingularity of his temper.

Excellent miniſter, I have often thought, that a diligent ſearcher into human nature may find better and more various materials for his enquiry in the noiſy factions, that divide a popular government, than in the court parties, which ariſe under the ſilent and regular

diſpenſations

diſpenſations of monarchy. In the debates of the one upon public buſineſs, a man muſt be very artful indeed, who can always conceal indiſcretion or vanity as an orator, avarice or ambition as a ſtateſman; who, in a ſudden emotion of the mind, or emergency of affairs, betrays neither fear nor raſhneſs, neither inſincerity nor weakneſs. In the councils of the other, thoſe, who are at the head of them, are not expoſed to the ſame means of diſcovering their abilities or foibles; every meaſure is taken at the unoppoſed ſuggeſtion of the miniſter, and the awful nod of the ſovereign. In the former, if the chief of a party is accuſed of crimes, the diſpute grows warm; his friends and his enemies diſtinguiſh themſelves; the underſtandings, the paſſions, the intereſts, the intrigues of both are laid open, and every man in Greece, according to his judgment, or his attachments, adopts the pretenſions of either. In the latter, all theſe are the ſubject of diſſimulation, and however different in different men, are covered by the ſame outſide; beſides, as things are more ſummarily managed, of courſe there cannot be the ſame room for indulging them: the whiſper of an eunuch decides the fate of a great miniſter, and the ſuffocating heat of the aſh-tower prevents the complaints of himſelf and his relations from piercing the ear of Aſia.

C.

LETTER

LETTER CLXXVI.

SAPPHO to CLEANDER.*

WHEN I own, CLEANDER, that I have ſeen thy ode upon the Attic myrtle, I think myſelf bound by it to no acknowledgment. CORINNA however inſiſts upon my writing about it, even though it be to confeſs a delicacy, which ſhe rallies as falſe and affected.

* The two letters of SAPPHO to CLEANDER are extremely obſcure. They relate to ſome correſpondence, which had been carried on between him and that lady, in which however there was nothing diſhonourable, as appears from ſeveral expreſſions in them. In the ſecond, ſhe opens herſelf with great ſeverity and reſentment on the manner, in which he had talked of the freedom, ſhe indulged him; but it is very probable ſhe was not rightly informed of his conduct, ſince the repreſentation here given of it, is entirely inconſiſtent with every ſentiment and every action, either explained or alluded to in this collection. Something muſt be allowed to her delicate ſenſe of honour, which might ſuſpect an injury, before almoſt the approach of it; and it is a preſumption in CLEANDER's favour, that though he frequented very much the houſe of ASPASIA, and, as he declares in Letter CXXXVI. even "courted the company of the fair ſex," that theſe are the only paſſages, which charge him with an unbecoming levity. Other negotiators have been leſs rigid in the ſame particular. Our Epheſian underſtood how to converſe with the ladies for political purpoſes, without proceeding to gallantries; which ſhews him to have been a complete maſter in the moſt refined inſinuation. [Note by the Tranſlator.

affected. I am too happy, ſhe cries, at any rate to be the ſubject of ſo exquiſite a muſe. Forgive me, CLEANDER; a temper leſs lively than hers is overcome by the ſentiments of the heart, and cannot but be ſhocked at a praiſe, that ſo plainly implies diſeſteem. What makes it the worſe is, that thy verſes are ſo likely to attain immortality. To be thus miſrepreſented by ſome inferior ſculptor, had been but a ſhort-lived vexation; but the hand of a PHIDIAS will tranſmit the error to poſterity. Let poſterity think as it pleaſes; for thee, CLEANDER, I would be adorned rather with theſe modeſt, ſoft, and female graces, which dwell retired among the domeſtic virtues, than with thoſe ſlight external charms, which have more luſtre in poetry. Remember too, that HOMER, (whom in the ſhades of Salamis we have ſo oft admired together, while the hours rolled away with an imperceptible ſwiftneſs,) whoſe beauties burſt upon thee with a blaze of light, while the wanton rays of ANACREON but played upon thy fancy, adorns his heroines with modeſt ſilence, and thinks the bluſh of VENUS too doubtful a praiſe, when he does not chaſtiſe it with the coy air of DIANA. I begin to be afraid, CLEANDER, that the unaffected eaſe of our Athenian manners, compared with thoſe of other countries more familiar to thee, has made thee form a judgment greatly to our diſadvantage. Obſerve, however, that the exact medium is equally diſtant from its extremes. Farewel: I accept the compliment of thy ode; I reject its flattery; and while you paint me with the ſhining qualities of the ancient SAPPHO, am too juſtly afraid of an inconſtant PHAON.

LET-

LETTER CLXXVII.

SAPPHO to CLEANDER.

YET once more will I truſt theſe treacherous tablets with the ſecret of my heart. Yet once more ſhall the vain CLEANDER boaſt, that he has received them from the hand of CORINNA; and from that air of myſtery ſhall draw to the giddy companions of his mirth what licentious inferences he pleaſes. The name of SAPPHO is deſtined, I find, to be toſt about by the infectious breath of ſlander, ſince CADMUS firſt brought into Greece the ill-fated letters, that compoſe it. Was it that name, CLEANDER, that inſpired thee with this vain preſumption? We both have been deceived by names: Faith, Honour, Conſtancy, Diſcretion, Tenderneſs, theſe too I find are empty names, no more implying any virtue in CLEANDER, than the deteſted name of SAPPHO imports that wild licentiouſneſs of conduct in the daughter of PALAMEDE, which in a former SAPPHO made it infamous.

Methinks, CLEANDER, (for imagination will ſtill be too buſy in retracing familiar ideas,) I ſee the aſtoniſhment, with which you read theſe tablets, ſo differently filled from what they uſed to be. The Muſes and the ſportive Graces here were uſed to court thy elegance of taſte. The Muſes and the ſportive Graces fled in a moment at the ſound of thy boaſting: yet they called not the revengeful ATE to ſupply their place. Thy life, CLEANDER, was now really in my hand. Thy treacherous correſpondence is betrayed by trea-

chery. The wretch has ſacrificed that truſt to an idle paſſion, which the intereſts of his country — I too, CLEANDER, have ſacrificed thoſe intereſts to thy ſafety. The tranſcript, which he ſhewed me of thy infamous letter, inſcribed to BAGOAS, hinders not my giving thee this neceſſary warning to ſecure thyſelf: ſuch are our Græcian notions of fidelity to thoſe, who once had a claim on our affections. Now boaſt among thy diſſolute companions of the fond weakneſs of thy Græcian miſtreſs. No, CLEANDER, the Gods will preſerve my country from thy pernicious attempts, nor ſuffer ſuch unjuſtifiable deſigns to proſper. As for my injured fame, before thou receiveſt theſe tablets, I ſhall have placed it under the inviolable protection of MINERVA, to whoſe chaſte ſervice the remainder of my days are devoted. The ſacred veil ſhall hide me for ever from thy eyes, which I could never meet again without too fierce an indignation. Stranger, farewel: as ſuch thou wert firſt introduced to me; as ſuch I now take my eternal leave of thee. May the waters of oblivion waſh out all remembrance of the interval, which, though abſolved by Virtue, will to Prudence be for ever unpardonable.

LETTER

LETTER CLXXVIII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. From Athens.

THE news of PYTHON's being confined to his houſe upon the firſt advice, which the king received, that ARTAPHERNES was ſtopped at Eione, has produced all the good effects here, which could be deſired from it. The moderation of ARTAXERXES in not carrying his reſentment further, till he knew, whether the collector was authorized in his proceeding, is applauded by the whole city; and they are at the ſame time made ſenſible, that a decent ſubmiſſion, and a diſavowal of ARISTIDES, are the only methods, to prevent the bad conſequences, which muſt befal them, in caſe of a breach with Perſia.

The aſſembly's letter to the king (which ARTAPHERNES ſends in his packet) charges, I believe, with great truth this extravagant action on the raſhneſs and inexperience of their commiſſioner; and the aſſurances contained in it, that he ſhall not be employed again in thoſe parts, are the utmoſt, that can be expected from this ſtate in the way of cenſure or puniſhment.

As thy diſpatches intimate, that the king ſeems diſpoſed to make a trial, whether Athens or Sparta will ſet the higheſt price on his friendſhip, we have not thought it prudent to inſiſt, that ARTAPHERNES ſhould be permitted to continue his journey to Lacedæmon, becauſe it would infallibly have been refuſed, and muſt have alarmed the republic with jealouſies, that all the propoſals, which have paſſed between us, were only in-

tended to diſguiſe the real deſigns of our monarch, to conclude a league to their prejudice with the Peloponneſian allies. The ſlighteſt circumſtance is ſufficient to raiſe ſuſpicions here, which the greateſt management and prudence cannot afterwards without difficulty allay; and there are ſeveral, who out of an inveterate hatred to Perſia, and vehement deſire of peace, loſe no occaſion to keep up the old prejudices, though at the preſent juncture the generality of the people begin to entertain more favourable impreſſions towards us.

We likewiſe conſidered, that if, as thou informeſt us, an expreſs is on the road with fuller powers to the Lacedæmonian embaſſadors, it becomes unneceſſary to carry on a negotiation at Sparta; ſince ARTAXERXES will, more conſiſtently with his own dignity and convenience, have the offers of that republic brought home to him, and be able to treat upon them within the walls of his palace, where buſineſs is tranſacted with far greater ſecrecy and diſpatch, than amidſt the uncertainties and tumults of theſe popular governments. Upon theſe conſiderations, ARTAPHERNES and myſelf preſume to hope, that the king will pardon our boldneſs in tranſgreſſing his ſacred orders, when, according to the beſt of our judgments on the ſpot, the carrying them into execution muſt have proved prejudicial to his ſervice.

I am not ſurprized, that in your intelligence from Lacedæmon, the ſtop, which has been put to ARTAPHERNES's journey, is attributed to the malice and curioſity of CLEON. That republic would be glad to incenſe the court of Suſa againſt one, whom they conſider

ſider as their mortal enemy, and revenge upon him the diſappointment they lie under, in not having the reſt of Greece witneſſes to the honour done them by a Perſian embaſſy. I need not mention to thee, how apt thoſe at a diſtance are to refine on every unforeſeen event, and to judge from appearances, which are often deceitful. Neither the ſuſpicions, with which you tell me the court abounds upon this occaſion, nor the accounts from Sparta, nor my own further enquiries here, give me any cauſe to change my opinion of the true ſpring of this accident, as laid open in my laſt diſpatch.

The people are come to a reſolution, after ſome debates, that embaſſadors ſhall be forthwith ſent to the Perſian court; and EPIGENES of the tribe Ajantis, HIPPONICUS of the tribe Cecropis, and HYPERBOLUS of the tribe Erechthis, were in the next aſſembly choſen to execute that commiſſion.

The firſt of theſe, in whoſe hands the ſecret ſeems moſt likely to be lodged, is a firm friend and partizan of CLEON's, who generally employs him to prepare the minds of the people for any project, which is afterwards deſigned to be laid before them in form. His manner of ſpeaking is plauſible, flowing, and pointed, and chiefly remarkable, for being always adapted to conciliate the affections of his hearers, and leave an impreſſion behind it, by giving ſome new and ingenious turn to the debate. Nor is his addreſs in private converſation accounted inferior to his public eloquence: he is happy at finding out expedients to overcome difficulties, and equally ready at creating them, when he is not inclined to facilitate matters. He is never at a

loſs for a ſmart or proper reply, and ſoon finds out the means of inſinuating himſelf into the good opinion of thoſe, with whom he has any buſineſs to tranſact, and brings them over to his ſentiments, without appearing to impoſe upon their judgments. The integrity of EPIGENES is by no means ſo univerſally acknowledged, as his abilities; he was never reckoned a ſlave to his word, and is immoderately attached to profit, having raiſed one of the largeſt fortunes in the city, (which he makes no haſte to ſpend,) from the office of collector of the tribute amongſt the iſlands, and from the preſents, which he receives from the allies for recommending their cauſes to the people. He has one paſſion, which renders him a very proper negotiator of an alliance between us and his ſtate, which is an implacable averſion to the Lacedæmonians, amongſt whom he received ſome particular ſubject of offence, when he was embaſſador at Sparta, before the war broke out. HYPERBOLUS, an Athenian of a bold licentious wit, told him not long ago, that "he found their iron money too weighty to be carried away, and has hated them on that account ever ſince."

HIPPONICUS boaſts his deſcent from HARMODIUS and ARISTOGITON, but cannot value himſelf upon inheriting many of their virtues. His intentions towards the public are not eſteemed bad, but his judgment is exceſſively weak, and his pride little inferior to his want of genius; ſo that with a great number of dependants, and a moſt plentiful eſtate, he is a very uſeleſs member of the commonwealth. He was in a conſtant oppoſition to the meaſures of PERICLES; and the laughers

aver,

aver, it was for no other reaſon, but that being a deſcendant of the patriots, who deſtroyed the uſurpation of PISISTRATUS, he thought himſelf obliged to act againſt one, who was ſaid to reſemble that tyrant. CLEON, by flattering his vanity, and affecting to pay the utmoſt deference to his opinion, has gained the entire aſcendant over him, and pitched upon him, as a fit perſon to maintain the dignity of the embaſſy, by his ſplendid manner of living. In this no one here can pretend to equal HIPPONICUS; and together with his family it is the only means, by which he preſerves any credit with the people. Our friends imagined, that the politeneſs and gaiety of CLORUS would mix very well with the dexterity of EPIGENES, and the magnificence of HIPPONICUS; and propoſed it to him to appear as a candidate. He was tranſported at the offer, talked of nothing but the honour he ſhould enjoy in being perſonally known to a miniſter of thy fame and abilities, and redoubled his complaiſance to ARTAPHERNES, from whom he preſſed for letters of recommendation to the principal ſatraps. But his felicity proved of ſhort duration; for NICIAS not finding his ſtrength ſufficient to prevent the embaſſy, made a brisk puſh to get in at leaſt one of CLEON's enemies, which occaſioned the choice of HYPERBOLUS to complete the number. This man is deſcended from the dregs of the people; his father was a branded ſlave, and himſelf ſtill carries on the trade of a lamp-maker. The meanneſs and profligacy of his manners are equal to the baſeneſs of his origin. He has had the good fortune to riſe into credit with the people, without a ſingle quality to

deſerve the meaneſt office in the republic; but they are pleaſed with the freedom and ſeverity of his abuſe, and make uſe of him to check the forwardneſs and extravagance of CLEON, and ſpirit up the caution and timidity of NICIAS. He is unconcerned at the worſt things, that can be ſaid of him, and is alike careleſs of glory, and inſenſible of ſhame. He profeſſes to oppoſe every meaſure, which CLEON recommends; and is conſequently a warm ſtickler for a peace with Sparta, and declares he accepts this office out of no other view, than to diſappoint the deſigns of ſuch, as would betray for lucre the common intereſt of Greece, and the honour of Athens, to the ancient and natural enemies of both.

I doubt not, when you have him at Suſa, that methods may be found to remove his prejudices; but at firſt you muſt be upon your guard againſt his violent behaviour, his ſcheming head, and his malicious heart.

Thou wilt ſmile, noble ſcribe, when I tell thee, that CLEON found none of his arguments made ſo deep an impreſſion on the people, as an oracle, which he pretended the Athenian deputies, who are juſt returned from the annual ſolemnity at Delos, had received from the high prieſt of APOLLO there. It is to the following effect: "When the birds of MINERVA and JOVE neſtle together, then ſhall the owl ride upon the dolphin's back, and the branches of the olive-tree overſhadow the earth."

As this oracle is interpreted to ſignify the encreaſe of the Athenian power and commerce by their union with Perſia, the people have it perpetually in their mouths;

mouths; and tell you, that the anſwers of the Delian God excel thoſe, which he delivers at his Delphic ſhrine, in certainty and clearneſs.

After all, I may well impute the weight, which is at preſent laid here upon the king's friendſhip, to the ſingular addreſs, capacity, and zeal of ARTAPHERNES, who has gained, in the ſhort time ſince his arrival, more perſonal eſteem and credit with thoſe, who direct the counſels of Athens, than any foreigner was ever known to acquire. I refer myſelf to his diſpatches for ſeveral material points, and ſhall conclude by aſſuring thee, that the embaſſadors will ſail with the firſt fair wind for Epheſus, as ſoon as their inſtructions are ready, which the aſſembly is now employed in preparing.

P.

Note by the Tranſlator.

From the abrupt manner, in which theſe letters conclude, the reader will be led to imagine, and perhaps to lament, that they have ſhared the ſame fate with many other valuable remains of antiquity, in not being handed down to us undefaced by the injuries of time and barbariſm. The judicious MESHOBAB is ſtrongly of opinion, that ſome epiſtles relating to the latter part of this collection are loſt; particularly thoſe, which muſt have been written during the time, that intervened between the election of the embaſſadors, and their embarking for Epheſus.

He

He likewiſe aſſures us, that, notwithſtanding his moſt accurate enquiries, he has never been able to diſcover, what became of CLEANDER, after the departure of ARTAPHERNES; and leaves it as an uncertain point, whether he took that opportunity of returning in his patron's train, and ſpent the remainder of a philoſophical life in cultivating his Lydian farms, and enjoying the agreeable ſociety at Taoces; or whether he continued to tranſact the Perſian buſineſs at Athens, in the quality of a private agent, ſome years longer.

The Tranſlator is, however, inclined to think, (with the learned Jew,) that the former is the moſt probable ſuppoſition; ſince the diſorders, which broke out in all parts of the empire upon the death of ARTAXERXES, muſt have drawn off the attention of the Perſians from Græcian politics, and added to the ſtrong paſſion, which CLEANDER has, in many of his letters, expreſſed, for retirement and quiet, by making it uneaſy and unſafe for him to act, amidſt ſuch frequent changes of princes as well as miniſters, and ſuch a fluctuating confuſed ſtate of affairs. It may not be improper to lay before the reader an exact tranſlation of the account given by THUCYDIDES (book 4.) of the ſeizure and diſmiſſion of ARTAPHERNES; which will ſerve as a remarkable

markable inſtance, to prove, how much his ſhort and imperfect narratives of negotiations, and civil matters, are cleared up and enlarged by the additional circumſtances, and facts, recorded in the Athenian Letters.

" In the beginning of the winter, ARISTIDES, the ſon of ARCHIPPUS, one of the commanders of the ſquadron, ſent to levy contributions, ſeized at Eione upon the Strymon, a Perſian named ARTAPHERNES, who was on his journey to Sparta with a commiſſion from the king. He was brought to Athens; and his papers being tranſlated out of the Aſſyrian tongue, were found to be addreſſed to the Lacedæmonians, and contained, amongſt other particulars, that the king was at a loſs to know their intentions; for, though they had ſent ſeveral embaſſadors to him, none of them agreed in making the ſame propoſals. If they meant to deal ſincerely with him, he deſired they would diſpatch his miniſter back to him with ſome citizens of their own. The Athenians ſoon after ſent embaſſadors to the Perſian court, accompanied by ARTAPHERNES, who, when they arrived at Epheſus, learnt the news of ARTAXERXES's death; upon which the embaſſadors returned home, without proſecuting their journey." P.

ADVER-

ADVERTISEMENT.

ADVERTISEMENT to the READER.

The following letter having been long miſlaid among the papers of the Tranſlator, it was not inſerted in its proper place, which is between the LXXVth and LXXVIth in the ſecond volume. The reader may recollect, that in the fifth year of the war, Letter LXXXII, p. 145 of the ſame volume, it is ſaid, that in the play of the Acharnenſes, ARISTOPHANES reflected on CLEON's character with particular ſeverity, for the proſecution commenced againſt himſelf in the fourth year. But it happens, that not the leaſt mention is made of the proſecution, which was very remarkable, in the correſpondence of that year, by the omiſſion of this letter.

LETTER *LXXV.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES.

THOU mayſt think it extraordinary, after all I have heard of the wiſdom of the Areopagus, that I never attended in any cauſe before that council till yeſterday. And the cauſe was indeed ſuch a one, that I ſhould have been curious to have heard the debate of it in a court, however low in reputation; much more before perſons of the higheſt for the good ſenſe and integrity of their judgments.

In the laſt great feaſt of BACCHUS, the ſolemnity of which draws a prodigious reſort of ſtrangers from all parts of Greece, ARISTOPHANES preſented a play intitled

titled THE BABYLONIANS; wherein CLEON was reflected upon in a manner, that greatly incenſed him. He was the more offended at it, as it is the firſt performance, in which he has been publicly ridiculed; and having been courted and admired, when he appeared at the head of an oppoſition to PERICLES, he is exceedingly impatient of any ſatyr, which tends to hurt his popularity. As the comedy had been received with much applauſe, he determined it ſhould be condemned upon legal reaſons, though it ſtood the teſt of a critical examination. Accordingly he delivered in an account of the offence to the Areopagus, and accuſed the poet, as "* guilty of defamation, and one, who expoſed the citizens and the ſtate to the deriſion of foreigners." Towards the dusk of the evening, the judges were ſeated in the open air upon MARS's hill. The plaintiff and defendant were placed on the ſtools of Injury and Innocence. CLEON opened with great ſpirit and impetuoſity; and notwithſtanding the diſguſt, which the people in general expreſſed at this attempt to deter the comic writers from that licentious buffoonery, which entertains and flatters them, he ſhewed himſelf ſuperior to ſuch murmurs, however affected by the ſtings of wit. He ſaid, "that he pretended to no rhetoric; nor would it be proper, or even lawful, to exert it before this judicature, if he excelled at all in it; but that there was a natural eloquence accompanying the complaints of the injured, which, if it betrayed

* Quo nomine dicam illi ſcripſit [ſc. CLEON ARISTOPHANI] ea autem erat ἀδικιὰς εἰς τὲς Πολίτας. PETIT. in leg. Att. p. 79.

him

him into warm expreſſions, might more eaſily be excuſed than controuled. He underſtood, from the laws of SOLON, that the republic had a tenderneſs for the reputation of private men, and allowed an action of ſlander; a ſtill greater for that of magiſtrates, in whoſe character its own dignity and welfare are concerned: that it was neceſſary their character ſhould be guarded by the ſevereſt laws in a Democracy, becauſe they are ſo very limited in the exerciſe of power. To ſupply the defects of power, their authority (which ariſes from reputation) muſt of courſe be ſteadily ſupported. That it mattered not, how far the facts alluded to in THE BABYLONIANS were true; it was to be conſidered, whether the alluſions carried an illegal reproach. That it became them to underſtand the paſſages, which gave them offence, in the ſame manner they were underſtood in full theatre; that the task of ſcandal would be very eaſy, if theſe pitiful tools of it were given to know, that their pieces are to be taken in one ſenſe by the audience, and in another by a court of juſtice. This would be giving a ſanction to evaſions, by which the effect of the laws may be either deſtroyed or diminiſhed. That he was extremely unwilling to find fault with any diverſions, which engaged the attention of Greece, and raiſed the glory of Athens; but he conſidered the contempt thrown on himſelf, the magiſtrates, and the public meaſures to be much worſe in the feſtivals, when there was ſo general a concourſe, than in ſuch as were attended merely by their own citizens. That it became every man, who loved his country, to draw a veil over its weakneſs, its puſillanimity, or raſhneſs,

and

and not to expoſe before all Greece in a fit of laughter, what they ſhould wiſh to hide even from themſelves. He concluded with hoping, that thoſe magiſtrates would protect the commonwealth from the impudent licence of comedy, who are expreſly forbidden by the laws to write a performance of that nature."

When CLEON had done, ARISTOPHANES was called upon to offer ſomething in his own defence. I thought the aſſurance of the man would not have deſerted him in any circumſtances; but the occaſion was too trying, and the place too ſolemn. He ſeemed much confounded, and his adverſary called out to him, "that he muſt not think of impoſing upon this tribunal by his theatrical pleaſantries;" which diſturbed him more. However he recovered himſelf ſo far as to ſpeak to the following effect: "That as the proſecution, carried on by CLEON in this court, was ſingular and new, though grounded on a law, which had been long in force, he hoped the judges would conſider well the conſequence of it, before they gave a determination. That no man knows what he does, when he makes a precedent; and if by cenſuring him upon the complaint before them, they ſhould go contrary to the opinion of the excellent judges, who had reviewed and allowed his comedy; contrary to the avowed practice of the ſtate; the poets would be uncertain, how far they were ſecure upon the ſtrength of the deciſions made by thoſe judges; the public feſtivals would be deprived of a very conſiderable ornament; and the vicious be equally ſafe with the virtuous from that ridicule, which had been found inſtrumental to good manners. That it was particularly the

buſineſs

buſineſs of this court to watch the morals of the people; but as they acted by certain rules, and could only lay open offences actually committed within the letter or intention of the law, there were ſeveral very blameable parts of conduct, both above and below their cognizance: that theſe equally belonged to the province of comedy; and where the ſword of the magiſtrate could either not reach, or not be ſuitably applied, he apprehended the poet to be uſeful. That he hoped the wiſdom of that council would protect ſuch, as were carrying on by efficacious, and, he conceived, legal means, the ends of their inſtitution. That this way of reforming was wonderfully agreeable to the people, and the nature of the government: that he feared more danger from the increaſe of thoſe diſorders, which the freedom of his pen had cenſured, than from the opinion the Greeks might entertain of the ſtate, by attending to the force of thoſe cenſures: that to be the firſt in diſcovering and acknowledging one's faults, is an argument of underſtanding, as to be the laſt in theſe important points, is an argument of exceeding folly: but it was not ſtrange, that theſe ſhould counſel others to hide their errors from themſelves, who were ſo uneaſy, when their own are reproved. That he was extremely ſorry to have a conteſt with one, who, in the time of PERICLES, was, of all the Athenians, that honoured his pieces with their preſence, the moſt applauding ſpectator."

I found the inclinations of the people, who attended theſe pleadings, not at all diſpoſed to favour CLEON; and the ſtroke, with which ARISTOPHANES concluded,

gave ſo much pleaſure, that it would have raiſed a general laugh againſt him, were not that directly forbidden by the rules of the court. The complaint was ordered to be reſerved for another hearing, and no judgment pronounced. It is thought, the affair will be dropped, and CLEON ſatisfied with terrifying ARISTOPHANES, and revenging himſelf by the ſeverity of his oration. The comic poet ſwears by THALIA, the muſe of his art, that he will not ſpare the currier in the next repreſentation at the leſſer feaſt of BACCHUS.

HYDASPES, thou haſt no notion of the ſatirical ſpecies of wit, ſo much admired in this country; and it is a greater commendation to ſay, thou wanteſt it, than that thou haſt the reſt at thy command. It is admired, becauſe it flatters the vanity of every private man to be entertained at the expence of his neighbours; and eſpecially, becauſe it flatters the licence of a popular government to be entertained at the expence of its leaders. Little minds are fond of placing themſelves on a level with the great; for if they fall very much below thoſe qualities, which adorn them, they are perhaps ſuperior to the foibles, which debaſe them. If this reflection on the weakneſs of great men, by proving that they are but men, could engage us to aſpire to an imitation of their excellencies, it were indeed a very uſeful conſequence; but I am afraid it makes us true to our own failings, and inclines us to purſue comparative, not real goodneſs. Let me add, that as in conſidering the portion of happineſs aſſigned us, we are apt to look upwards, and repine, if others have apparently more; ſo in conſidering our moral perfection, we

are apt to look downwards, and are ſatisfied, if others have apparently leſs; whereas in both caſes the reverſe is the right conduct. And were it followed, we ſhould endeavour to copy the beſt models, inſtead of being contented to avoid the worſt. For this reaſon it would be far better, if, as in the earlieſt times, wit were exerciſed in the panegyrics of Gods and heroes, to invite us to moral actions, by repreſenting the moſt perfect patterns, and not in ſatyr, which delights only in pictures of deformity. There would be leſs too of the diſguſt and melancholy, which ſpeculations on the dark ſide of human nature occaſion in the generality, above all, in the moroſely virtuous, who form ideas of its corruptions worſe than its moſt depraved condition will juſtify; or the very being of ſociety admit. In a word, the virtue of every man would then be adjuſted according to the exemplar given us in the characters of heroes, and the natural conſtitution of things, not meaſured by the failings of thoſe about him; and the world might be reſtored to its own good opinion, as well as to the favour of OROMASDES.

C.

APPENDIX.

THE tranſlator has thrown this letter, which was found towards the middle of the collection, at the end of it, as being manifeſtly ſpurious. He apprehends it to have been written by the Jew, ſo much ſpoken of in the preface; nor can he value himſelf on diſcovering the forgery, becauſe, except we would ſuppoſe CLEANDER to have been particularly honoured

with a prophetic viſion, (which the reader will not haſtily credit,) it cannot be regarded as genuine. The performance ſeems intended to compliment the new philoſophy, in which our learned MESHOBAB may be ſuppoſed to have informed himſelf; and in that light (to do him juſtice) is not without art or ingenuity. He probably thought this the moſt elegant way of introducing ſuch a compliment, as extravagant flights of fancy in allegorical dreams or fables are agreeable to the taſte of the Rabbi's, and the manner of the Talmud. One might inſiſt, if it were neceſſary, on the difference to be obſerved in the very air of the compoſition from the reſt of the whole book; how much it reads in the Spaniſh with the eaſe and grace of an original, while the letters, that are of undoubted authority, carry along with them that ſtiffneſs, which is inſeparable from the pureſt tranſlations. But the editor cannot flatter himſelf, that the difference he is ſpeaking of, will be felt by the Engliſh reader, as he is conſcious, that the meanneſs of his own verſion has reduced them to the ſame level.

LETTER CLXXIX.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS.

THOU haſt had frequent ſpecimens of my manner of philoſophizing; but no enquiry was ever ended ſo remarkably, as one, which employed me laſt night. I was preparing a few thoughts for thee upon the origin and meaning of that worſhip, which has been paid

paid to VESTA, considered in the capacity both of [a] Earth and [b] Fire. The question was perplexed with such difficulties, that at last I despaired of unravelling it, and retired to my couch. I little apprehended any extraordinary impressions from the speculation, but soon found it engaged me in my sleep; and when the morning brings with it the purer visions, imagination of its own accord performed in a dream, what I had in vain sought from the efforts of my reason. The first part is intelligible, since it arose from images, with which I had just been conversing; but as these wore off, the last part grew wild, and was obscure to me, whatever the relation of it may appear to thy more enlightened understanding. The soul at once unfettered itself from the body, and was amused, either in fantastic rovings, or prophetic suggestions.

I thought myself suddenly transported without the walls of [c] Corinth on a plain, where stood a temple erected to the Goddess. It was in form a rotunda, with extended porticos, that faced the different quarters of the world, and served as avenues to the body of the

[a] Καὶ γαῖα μήτηρ, Ἑστίαν δὲ σ' οἱ σοφοὶ
Βροτῶν καλοῦσιν, ἡμένην ἐν αἰθέρι. EUR.

[b] Νυμᾶς δὲ λέγεται καὶ τὸ τῆς Ἑστίας ἱερὸν ἐγκύκλιον περιεκαλίσθαι τῷ ἀσβέστῳ περὶ φρυράν· ἀπομιμούμενος ὑ τὸ σχῆμα τῆς γῆς, ὡς Ἑστίας οὔσης, ἀλλὰ τὸ σύμπαντος κόσμου, ὑ μέσον οἱ Πυθαγορικοὶ τὰ πῦρ ἱδρυσθαι νομίζουσι, καὶ τοῦτο Ἑστίαν κάλουσι καὶ μονάδα. PLUT. in Num. p. 67. T. 1. Ed. Franc. 1599.

[c] There was a temple at Corinth dedicated to VESTA. See PAUSANIAS Cor.

building, all tending towards it, like radii to the centre of a circle. They were ſupported by pillars of the moſt elegant proportions, but of the ſimpleſt order. The walls and ceilings were not covered with reliefs or fabulous paintings, to catch the eye, and conceal defects in the architecture, which from the juſtneſs of it gave pleaſure to the judicious, and without ornament engaged even the ignorant ſpectator in admiring it. I preſſed through a crowd of people, who were contemplating the outſide, and entered at the [d]Eaſtern gate, where I perceived the generality went in; for though the reſt were open, to intimate, that the Goddeſs gave free admiſſion to her votaries, yet they were frequented by none. Scarce had I made my way into the portico, when one met me, who ſeemed by a certain air of ſuperiority, and the reſpect, which every body paid him, to be the prieſt of the dome. His face was wrinkled with age, but had a dignity and ſpirit, which excited veneration. He bore in his hand a wand, that geometricians uſe to draw figures in the ſand. The number three, called the perfect harmony, was wrought in the ſkirt of his garment, which, as it flowed behind him, diſcovered ſometimes to my amazement a golden thigh. By theſe marks I knew him for PYTHAGORAS. He received me courteouſly, and commanded me to follow him. When he ſaw I was under ſome confuſion at this unexpected civility, and ſeemed dubious of the conditions, on which I was to accept it,

[d] Aſtronomy and phyſics were firſt ſtudied and taught in the eaſtern countries.

he

he aſſured me, that he would diſpenſe with the ſilence he often impoſed on his novices, and encouraged me to diſcourſe freely. As we approached the rotunda, we fell in with a great number of [e] Chaldean aſtronomers, Ægyptian prieſts, Phœnician ſailors, and Perſian magi, who were paying their oblations to the Deity; and believe me, excellent SMERDIS, in this laſt number I obſerved a reſemblance of thee.

The image of the Deity was [f] repreſented ſitting, to intimate ſtability. A torch was held in her right hand, and a patera in her left: the one to expreſs her character as the genial heat of the ſyſtem; the other, that as the perſon of philoſophy, ſhe expected continual preſents ſhould be made to her, becauſe philoſophy is the nobleſt exerciſe of the reaſon. Before her ſtood an altar with fire always blazing, and ſix prieſteſſes danced round it in myſtic meaſures. My guide told me, they copied the movements of the worlds on high. I put queſtions to him, in walking over the temple, concerning the antiquity and ceremonies of it. He anſwered, that himſelf had raiſed it, and that every man was admitted, who had contributed in the leaſt to the improvement of phyſical knowledge.

On returning to the eaſtern avenue, I was ſurprized to ſee many in Græcian habits, in cloſe [g] conference with the Ægyptians, and particularly with one, who

[e] In this viſion the progreſs of philoſophy is marked from the earlieſt ages to our own times.

[f] The ſymbols are drawn from the accounts of antiquity.

[g] It is well known, that the Greek philoſophers uſed to travel into Ægypt, to receive the inſtructions of the prieſts.

ſtood near the rotunda, and held a volume under his arm. They told me his name was HERMES TRISMEGISTUS. Afterwards they repaired to the weſtern door, and came up in form with their offerings to the Goddeſs. The firſt was [h] THALES, whom PYTHAGORAS received with much regard, and made him a low obeiſance as to his maſter. He advanced to the altar, and out of a cup, which he brought with him, made [a] libation, which damped the flame of it; and on enquiry I found it to be water. The prieſteſſes were in a good deal of conſternation, but the thing proved of no conſequence. His great merit in other reſpects was admitted as an excuſe for his conceit, that "water was the firſt principle of all things;" which he defended with a good deal of wild ingenuity. The next, who appeared, were [i] ANAXIMENES and [k] METON; the one laid a gnomon or dial, and the other a calendar on the ſhrine. PYTHAGORAS ſeemed pleaſed with their offerings; and I took notice, through the whole of the ſcenary, that the experimental philoſophers were more acceptable than the ſyſtematical reaſoners. After this [l] DEMOCRITUS came forward with one of his followers, whoſe name and perſon I was unacquainted

[h] THALES was the maſter of PYTHAGORAS.

[i] ANAXIMENES was the firſt, who brought a dial into Greece, and put it up at Sparta to the aſtoniſhment of that people.

[k] METON was the firſt, who reduced the Greek calendar into method. He lived towards the beginning of the Peloponneſian war.

[l] See Letter XXVII. Vol. I.

with.

with. He laughed exceedingly at THALES, as he paſſed by; and when he came to the image, compoſed himſelf with difficulty, and threw down an heap of ſand. The aſſembly cried out to him, that he had fixed the ridicule on himſelf. This only increaſed his diverſion, and he immediately went away with his pupil. PYTHAGORAS declared, "he was glad to be well rid of them, adding, that he was more averſe to the [m] ſcholar, than the maſter; ſince I have objections to him, ſaid he, not only as a maintainer of the atomic ſcheme, and a contemner of the Goddeſs; but as one, who, though he lives upon legumes himſelf, teaches others to have an extravagant fondneſs for fleſh." As ſoon as theſe withdrew, [n] ANAXAGORAS appeared, who, notwithſtanding he denied the divinity of MITHRAS, had more honours paid him, than the moſt ſtrenuous aſſertor of it among the magi in the eaſtern avenue. I was going to have expoſtulated with the prieſt on this manifeſt partiality, but was called off to other objects. For on caſting my eyes to the weſtern entrance, I thought I ſaw my friend [o] SOCRATES look in upon us:

[m] EPICURUS, a philoſopher of great temperance in his own manners, but whoſe principles have been thought to lead to very hurtful conſequences. His followers were gerally remarkable for their debauched and luxurious way of living.

[n] See Letter XXXVIII. Vol. I. He was accuſed at Athens for impiety, having aſſerted the Sun to be a maſs of fire, no bigger than the Peloponneſus.

[o] SOCRATES had a contempt for phyſical ſcience, and applied himſelf to morals, as being much more certain and important.

he

he turned away preſently with an air of irony and banter. He ſeemed to have two diſciples with him; the [p] one followed his maſter; and the [q] other, having accompanied him a little while, ſtepped back, and viſited the temple. His fellow called after him, and rebuked him, but he gave no attention to it. He ſeemed habited with much oſtentation, and had a majeſty in his gait and manner, that was almoſt theatrical. Many thronged about him, and endeavoured to recommend themſelves; but it was remarkable, that [r] one of his pupils, who had a rough bold appearance, yet whoſe demeanor beſpoke a good deal of ſmartneſs and ſenſe, preſſed rudely by him, and pretended, that he had a better right to the general approbation. Inſtead of obſerving (what I naturally expected from this event) indignation in the faces of thoſe, who beheld it, I found moſt people were not diſſatisfied; and that the man, by a plauſible ſubtilty in his way of talking, ſoon captivated the underſtandings and affections of thoſe, who heard him. At laſt his friends begun to make ſuch a noiſe, that PYTHAGORAS thought it quite indecent. He reminded them, "that the glory of the Goddeſs was advanced by ſilence and contemplation, not [s] ſophiſtry

[p], [q] XENOPHON and PLATO. The former was a ſtrict follower of his maſter, and uſed to complain of the latter, that he deviated from the maxims of SOCRATES. They had on this account a great averſion to one another.

[r] ARISTOTLE, who took a pleaſure to contradict PLATO his maſter, and differ from him in his writings.

[s] The Ariſtotelian way of diſputation has more obſtructed the progreſs of ſcience, in the opinion of lord BACON, than any other cauſe, which can be aſſigned.

and

and diſpute;" and proteſted, he would turn them every one out of the dome, if they would not be quiet. "As to the perſon, to whom the indignity was offered, he ſeemed inclined to turn back again, and find out SOCRATES. Accordingly, after converſing with ſome of the [t] geometricians, he was preparing to go out; but PYTHAGORAS ſtopped him at the door, and recommended him to four of his followers, who opened to him the myſteries of that philoſophy. He then left us, nor appeared a ſecond time amongſt us. I obſerved, during the whole of this time, that the weſtern portico was every inſtant more and more crowded with the worſhippers of the Goddeſs. Some entered with diſſections of plants and animals, others with catalogues of the ſtars, others with ſpheres; all which they offered to the image. In the company of thoſe, who walked about with white wands, and were often intent on the ſchemes they drew upon the ground, I could not avoid taking notice of a perſon, who had a cone and cylinder in one hand, and a pully in the other. I heard him [u] ſay, "if he had a proper place to ſtand in, he would move the earth." Not long after, there came in [w] one of a fine preſence

[t] PLATO was fond of geometry, and the powers of numbers. Though he profeſſed to take in all parts of ſcience, yet he applied himſelf chiefly to morality. He was inſtructed in the Pythagorean philoſophy by ACRON, TIMÆUS, ARCHYTAS, and EURYTUS, who were of that ſect.

[u] A celebrated ſaying of ARCHIMEDES at the ſiege of Syracuſe, when he deſtroyed the Roman ſhips, by raiſing them into the air with a vaſt engine.

[w] JULIUS CÆSAR, who reformed the calendar.

and

and graceful mien, with a laurel-wreath upon his head, and a robe of a new and particular faſhion, which hung looſely from his left ſhoulder. Every body made way for him, and expected, that he would have paid ſome reſpect to the moſt diſtinguiſhed in the crowd, as he paſſed up to the rotunda; but he ſpoke to no body except METON; then addreſſed himſelf to the altar, preſented a new calendar, and walked out again.

While I was expreſſing my ſurprize to PYTHAGORAS at the ſight of this extraordinary perſon, methought the whole aſſembly [z] vaniſhed on the ſudden. We found ourſelves deſerted and alone. On looking out towards the plain, a new temple appeared on the other ſide, built much after the manner of PYTHAGORAS's, and deſigned to rival it. A great crowd was gathered about it, and all men went into it. Curioſity diſpoſed me to viſit it; but my philoſophic guide was exceedingly averſe to the propoſal, and would have diſſuaded me from it. "I am not willing, cried he, you ſhould give countenance to popular errors; and be aſſured, that while this fabric ſtands the teſt of many ages, and engages the veneration of wiſe poſterity, that will fall into decay and ruin." When I arrived at the dome, I could hardly make my way into it for the numbers, that ſurrounded it, and filled the avenues and precincts of it. As ſoon as I got near enough to the Goddeſs, I diſcerned, that the place was conſecrated to VESTA

[z] In the barbarous ages, when the Ptolomaic ſyſtem was moſt univerſally credited, the writings and opinions of the ancients were almoſt forgotten.

in

in the capacity of earth. An altar of turf ſtood before the image, which was, as in the other temple, repreſented ſitting. Seven prieſteſſes attended it, but their [y] dance was ſo extremely confuſed and irregular, that I could not help ſaying to one, who was near me, "there was neither grace nor harmony in their mo-"tion." The chief prieſt, who overheard me, and had taught them the perplexed figures, which they moved in, expreſſed ſome anger at my freedom, and would have put me out of countenance, had I not been ſupported by a [z] king, who came far from the weſt, and declared publickly, "If he had been conſulted on the "plan both of the building and the dance, he would "have contrived much better." The moſt devout worſhipper was a [a] ſatrap of Babylon, followed by a great number of Arabians, who were equally admirers of the prieſt, and votaries of the Deity, with himſelf. I obſerved about this time a very extraordinary perſon, dreſſed in a plain white habit tied round his body with a rope, his head coveredwith a veil or hood, which on the veil's being thrown back dazzled my eyes, as it were made of [w] braſs.

He

[y] The cycles and epicycles of PTOLEMY. He appeared under ANTONINUS PHILOSOPHUS, and was a famous geographer and aſtronomer in Alexandria.

[z] ALPHONSO, King of Caſtile, who is reported to have ſaid, on being inſtructed in PTOLEMY's aſtronomy, that had God conſulted him at the creation, he could have contrived a much ſimpler ſyſtem.

[a] ALMAMON, caliph of Babylon, who cauſed PTOLEMY's works to be tranſlated into Arabic, about the eleventh century.

[w] The reader will preſently find, that this deſcription is meant for Friar BACON, who had a very inventive and inquiſitive genius, in an age of blind ignorance and ſubjection to the authority of great names. He was vulgarly taken for a conjurer and magician, becauſe he knew more of the wonders of nature than other men. The ſtories of the brazen

He pryed with the minuteſt exactneſs into every corner of the temple, and diſdained to be content with the information, which the ordinary attendants would have afforded him. This behaviour raiſed great jealouſy and great admiration. In his right hand he held pieces of cryſtal cut into various forms; in his left, a few ſpecimens of different kinds of minerals. He was deſirous to approach the altar, and made towards it, that, as he ſaid, he might contemplate at leiſure the rites of it, and the influence, which the charms of the Prieſteſſes had in [x] engaging every ſpectator to the worſhip of the Deity. By this time the freedom of his ſpirit had gained him enemies. They applied themſelves to keep him as near the door, and as far from the receſſes of the temple as they could; and in a moment I heard a confuſed, ſenſeleſs, and unintelligible murmur of necromancy, magic, enchanter; and many perſons, exactly habited in the ſame manner with himſelf, whiſpered much ſlander of him amongſt the croud. Some expreſſed the greateſt abhorrence of him on account of theſe ſuggeſtions; others were ſo ſilly, as both to believe, that he was ſkilled in divination, and to be pleaſed with hearing it. They propounded curious queſtions to him, and ſecretly aimed to be inſtructed by him in the art. He took great pains

brazen head which, gave articulate ſounds, are unqueſtionably fabulous. He wrote of viſion, of optical glaſſes, of chemiſtry, &c. He had ſome faith in aſtrology, but much more qualified and philoſophical than that of the generality, who have been devoted to it. Pope NICHOLAS the 4th, by the inſtigation of the monks of BACON's own order, put him under cloſe confinement, from which he was ſet at liberty by the means of ſeveral noble perſons. It is very probable from ſome paſſages in his works, that he was the inventor of gunpowder.

[x] Aſtrology, which is productive of the worſt ſuperſtition, was derived from, and chiefly purſued during the credit and cultivation of the falſe aſtronomy.

to

to explain and vindicate at large his conduct, yet to no purpoſe. I then ſaw the chief prieſt of this ſpurious temple command one, who ſtood near him, and was much diſtinguiſhed by his favour, to go and bind in chains the man, who had created ſo much attention, and diſturbed the ſervice and devotion of the place. He, who had been thus commanded, executed his office with a ſuitable ſeverity. He wore a rich prieſtly garment and a ſcarlet cap. To his girdle was fixed a bunch of keys, which, as I thought, belonged to the ſeveral gates and doors of the Rotunda. I felt a very hearty compaſſion for the fate of the unhappy perſon, which prompted me to walk towards him, and adminiſter ſome comfort. But on talking with him, I found, that a juſt reſentment had poſſeſſed him very ſtrongly; for he proceeded even to menaces, and told me, that "by JUPITER, he knew of a certain combuſtible mat-"ter, which, if properly applied, would tear the temple "from it's foundations, and bury the prieſt with his Veſta "in the ruins of it." Others came up, who releaſed him, and immediately he retired in precipitation, with [b] one, whom I underſtood to be his diſciple and intimate fellow-labourer. Some time after, the dome gave a loud and dreadful crack: the aſſembly had for the moſt part warning and leiſure to retire, but on it's fall the prieſt and Goddeſs were never heard of more.

I could not in my own mind acquit this ſtranger with the brazen head (for whom I almoſt began to entertain as much reſpect, as for my friend with the golden thigh) of having a principal ſhare in producing this event. However, I forbore to ſay what I knew of it, and

[b] THOMAS BUNGEY, a Franciſcan frier, the follower and companion of ROGER BACON.

haſtened

haſtened back to PYTHAGORAS's temple with the multitude, where I was amazed on my return to find the moſt conſiderable philoſophers, who were before in the [c] weſtern avenue, again making their appearance in it. And now great numbers, who were received with peculiar honours, came in from a quarter, where I leaſt expected them, the northern portico. They were habited in an uncouth manner, and wholly unlike any thing I have ſeen either in Perſia or in Greece. The [d] firſt made a merit of that, which I had been careful not to charge on any one; and indeed took away my ſuſpicions of the man, who had been fettered in the other temple, by recommending himſelf for having endeavoured to draw the many from the worſhip of the pretended Deity, to revive the honours of the true. He deſcribed the ſeveral arts he had uſed, to undermine and deſtroy that temple, with ſucceſs. PYTHAGORAS received him affectionately, and admitted him into a partnerſhip of the prieſthood for his extraordinary ſervices. The [e] next, who came forward, laid a teleſcope at the foot of the altar. The [f] third, who had a good deal of pride and haughtineſs in his manner, was employed to delineate the motions of the heavenly bodies on the roof of the Rotunda. He afterwards talked to PYTHAGORAS about reconciling the worſhip of the two temples, but the propoſition was rejected with contempt.

[c] Alludes to the reſtoration of the ancient philoſophy and writings.

[d] When COPERNICUS appeared in the thirteenth century, the ſyſtem of PTOLEMY loſt it's reputation. He was the reſtorer of the Pythagorean opinion, that the ſun is in the center.

[e] GALILEO the inventor of the teleſcope.

[f] TYCHO BRAHE the Dane, who lived in the fifteenth century

tempt. The [f] fourth was dreſſed in a ſoldier's habit. He carried in his hand a double cube, and had a rabble of chymiſts at his heels. As he came up to the altar, he juſtled him, who had ſo rudely preſſed by his maſter early in the viſion, and a conteſt enſued. The ſuffrages of the croud were divided; but the military philoſopher having the geometricians on his ſide, ſeemed to get the better in the diſpute. They were both jealous of their fame, and diligent to canvaſs the opinions of the by-ſtanders. At laſt [h] one advanced up the ſame avenue, who profeſſed himſelf not ſatisfied with the reaſonings of either. He wore a gown covered with loops of gold, and in the form and richneſs of his habit

century, in a little iſland, which the king of Denmark had given him. He is repreſented to have been of a moroſe temper, but a great aſtronomer. He ſpent twenty years and 5000 dollars in making a ſphere, on which he had delineated, with the utmoſt exactneſs, the various courſes of the planets and appearances of the conſtellations at various ſeaſons of the year. He has given an accurate deſcription of it in his works. There is a ſyſtem called the Tychonic, deſigned to compound the difference between the Ptolomaic and Copernican. See HUET.

[f] DESCARTES, who had been a ſoldier, before he turned philoſopher, helped to reform the errors, and hurt the credit of ARISTOTLE, whoſe opinions had long been the ſtandard of ſcience. His geometry is much eſteemed. He was the inventor of the double cube, and a favourite of the chymiſts.

[h] Lord Chan. BACON, who firſt opened the method of induction in philoſophy, and reaſoning from effects to cauſes. See his *Novum Organum*, and his book *de Augm. ſcientiarum*.

differed

differed from the reſt. On inquiry, I found, though he was employed in a public character in his own country, yet he had found leiſure, as well as genius and inclination, to ſtrike into the paths of philoſophy, and was deſirous to pay his homage to the ſhrine. At parting he put a paper into the hands of PYTHAGORAS, which was a project for the improvement of the ſciences. He was ſucceeded by [i]another, who had an aſpect of great ſerioufneſs and piety, and uſhered in a large tribe of worſhippers. He held in his hand an [k]air-pump, and [l]diſcourſed ſtrongly with PYTHAGORAS in favour of the paper, which had juſt been preſented to him. When I ſurveyed the train, that followed him, I could neither count the number of perſons, who poured in one after another, nor the inventions, which they brought with them. Among theſe

[i] Mr. BOYLE, one of the firſt, who ſtruck into lord BACON's way with extraordinary ſucceſs, and was the beſt experimental philoſopher, that any age has known. He attempted an hiſtory of the air, and contrived the air-pump.

[k] The Jew has a note in this place, where he ſays, that for the ſake of brevity and perſpicuity, he has uſed the modern term air-pump, and in another the word pendulum; becauſe they are expreſſed with much circumlocution in the old Perſic, and the things are to be known with difficulty from the particular deſcriptions of them; a note plainly intended to imprint a notion of ſerioufneſs, and amuſe the reader.

[l] Alluding to Mr. BOYLE's treatiſes on the Uſefulneſs of experimental knowledge, which he publiſhed at the time of inſtituting the Royal Society.

I obſerved,

I obſerved, that two [m] men ſtepped up to the veſtal, who ſtood outermoſt in the rotunda, and preſented her with five pages, and a golden ring. But methought the oddeſt figure I ſaw, was a [n] perſon, who entered the temple with a pair of wings upon his back, and on coming near to the altar, eyed a virgin attending one of the prieſteſſes with ſo much tenderneſs, that the generality begun to laugh at him, and concluded his gravity had a great mixture of abſurdity. What made it the more ridiculous was, that every one underſtood ſhe was not to be come at, and had made a vow of chaſtity. Thoſe, who knew him better, ſaid, he was a man of ſenſe, and truly devoted to the Goddeſs. The next, who drew my attention, drew upon himſelf likewiſe the eyes and admiration of all preſent. He had ſuch a modeſty in his deportment, that while he bluſhed to receive thoſe honours, which were paid to his merit, he put envy and detraction out of countenance. The geometricians went in a body to meet him; and it was remarked, that he paid a particular reſpect to [o] one of them, to whom he owned himſelf greatly obliged. The two contending philoſophers were the only men unhappy in his preſence; they united on this

[m] HUYGENS and CASSINI diſcovered the Satellites and ring of Saturn.

[n] Biſhop WILKINS had a ſtrong notion, that an art of flying might be invented, and ſtruck out ſeveral ſchemes for accompliſhing a voyage to the moon. Though he had a clear, reaſoning, mathematical head, yet he indulged himſelf in conceits of this nature. See his Math. Magic, &c.

[o] Sir ISAAC NEWTON was a great admirer of EUCLID.

occaſion, and went out together. As the northern genius came forward, PYTHAGORAS entreated him to accept his office in that temple, as more worthy of it than himſelf. He declined it, and ſaid, "he was ſenſible, that theſe favours much exceeded the meaſure of his deſerts. He could wiſh therefore, that an intimate friend of his might ſhare in them, from whom he had received many lights, and who would yield to no body in that aſſembly, either for the zeal, or the ſucceſs of his enquiries after truth." Immediately PYTHAGORAS led up [p] one, who preſented a magnet, and a bag of winds; of which laſt, I was told, he better underſtood the management, than either [q] ULYSSES or his companions. This excellent perſon then advancing himſelf towards the Goddeſs, laid a [r] cryſtal priſm and a [s] pendulum at her feet. The image nodded, and the flame on the altar burnt brighter. In that inſtant I imagined I ſaw SOCRATES among his attendants. I accoſted him immediately, and asked, what had induced him to enter the temple now, when he had paſſed by it before with diſdain. He anſwered, "All truths are connected. This great man has carried natural knowledge to ſuch an height, that I am convinced the bounds of moral philoſophy muſt be extended in proportion." "Surely, ſaid I to myſelf in rapture and aſtoniſhment, we have cauſe to regret the unmeaſura-

[p] Dr. HALLEY. See his theory of the magnet and of the winds in the Philoſophic. Tranſact.

[q] See the X. B. HOM. ODYSS.

[r], [s] The one alluding to his diſcoveries in optics; the other to his grand principle of gravitation.

bleneſs

bleneſs of art, and the ſhortneſs of life, which contribute equally to conceal from us theſe amazing diſcoveries. There has not been wanting induſtry or genius in our times; but we poſſeſs theſe inſtruments of ſcience in vain, if what the reaſon of one age approves, the reaſon of another condemns; and if it be the will of the great OROMASDES, that truth ſhould be rather ſtumbled on by accident, than found upon ſearch. We have a contempt for the low attainments of ancient days; and yet our ſucceſſors will ſtill more juſtly laugh at us, for giving credit to the [t] water of THALES, and the [u] atoms of DEMOCRITUS, when by the aſſiſtance of

[t], [u] Sir ISAAC NEWTON ſeems, in different parts of his life, to have entertained conjectures, not unlike the two different principles on which the ſyſtems of THALES and DEMOCRITUS were founded, though conceived and expreſſed much more intelligibly and philoſophically. In a letter to Mr. OLDENBURG, dated Jan. 25, 1675-6, he has theſe remarkable words; "The frame of nature may be nothing but various contextures of Ætherial ſpirits condenſed as it were by precipitation, ſomething after the manner, that vapours are condenſed into water, or exhalations into groſſer ſubſtances, though not ſo eaſily condenſible; and after condenſation wrought into various forms, at firſt by the immediate hand of the Creator, and ever ſince by the power of nature, who, by virtue of the command, increaſe and multiply, became a complete imitator of the copies ſet her by the protoplaſt. Thus may all things be originated from Æther, &c." In the ſecond edition of his Optics, 1717, towards the concluſion he expreſſes himſelf thus; "All bodies ſeem to be compoſed of hard particles; for otherwiſe fluids would not

of a few rational principles, and rational men, they ſhall have opened a field of knowledge to be perpetually enlarged by experience; in which every one of common ſenſe, and common obſervation, may be uſeful; where the ſenſualiſt may find ſomething, that will promote his pleaſures, and the virtuous can find nothing, that is unworthy of his labours." This ſtrain of eloquence diſturbed my reſt, and broke the agreeable viſion.

Excellent SMERDIS, vouchſafe to unfold the hidden meaning of what I have related. If the whole be chimerical, and aroſe from the fumes of indigeſtion, and a diſordered ſtate of body, permit me at leaſt to ſay, that my ſleeping thoughts are much better than my waking ones. But if it was preſented to my fancy by thoſe genii, who haunt the ſlumbers of the pious, and poſſeſs the mirror of futurity, I ſhall think myſelf the moſt highly favoured of mank[illegible] C.

not congeal, &c. and therefore hardneſs may be reckoned the property of all uncompounded matter, &c. All theſe things conſidered, it is probable, that God in the beginning formed matter in ſolid, maſſy, hard, impenetrable, moveable particles, &c. Theſe primitive particles being ſolid, are incomparably harder than any porous bodies compounded of them; even ſo hard, as never to break or wear in pieces, &c." The firſt of theſe conjectures bears a reſemblance to the water or Æther of THALES; the ſecond to the atomic or corpuſcular philoſophy of DEMOCRITUS.

End of the Fourth Volume.

The Grenville Library